AN

IMPARTIAL REVIEW

OF THE

CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES

OF THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

By AN AMERICAN.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

WHEN the following letters were written, they were not intended for the Preſs, but were propoſed as inſtruction for two or three young gentlemen, who wiſhed for information on the cauſes of the French Revolution.

The facts contained in theſe letters, which took place before the acceſſion of the late King of France, are collected from good Authors. Thoſe which happened in his reign, and before the beginning of the Revolution, were obtained by a correſpondence and an acquaintance with French Men of intelligence, and good character. Thoſe which have taken place under the revolutionary ſtate, are collected from ſuch hiſtories as have been offered on that great event, from fugitive pieces, and from a cloſe attention to the affairs and movements of the parties in that nation.

The ſentiments upon civil, and natural Liberty, *upon the effects and conſequences of Monarchical and Republican Governments, will bear the teſt of truth and propriety.*

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THE AUTHOR.

AN IMPARTIAL REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE *FRENCH REVOLUTION.*

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LETTER No. I.

PERFECT Liberty, is found on a point far beyond the reach of civil ſociety, and quite removed from all ſocial obligation: There the man has no law, but his own will; is driven by no force, but that of his own paſſions; is bound by no other bands than thoſe which reſult from his own neceſſities, and has no motive to exertion beſides what ariſes from the propenſities of his own nature. There he roams the wilderneſs, uncontrouled by his fellow-mortals; unaſſiſted by their liberality, and unawed by their opinions.

THE extreme oppoſite of this ſolitary ſituation, is found in Turky in Europe, at this day. It has been ſeen as lately as within the two laſt centuries, in that part of Europe, which boaſt of chriſtianity; and is now in actual exiſtence in thoſe European provinces and theſe American States, where the African ſlavery is under a legal eſtabliſhment. Where one of the human race exiſts without a capacity to hold property, or to

have

have a dominion, or controul over external things; where he is, himſelf, but the chattel or property of another, who can diſpoſe of his life at pleaſure, and with impunity; there ſlavery is complete, and forms a full orbed contraſt to perfect liberty.

Between theſe dreadful extremes, civil government finds its place. It is bounded on one ſide by the one, and on the other ſide by the other. Though civil government does actually exiſt in the country, where the ſlave is chained to the oar of miſery, by the public opinion, yet it does not exiſt for him, he derives no advantage from it: he has neither perſon or property.

There can be no civil government exerciſed on men with propriety, as ſubjects, without affording a degree of civil liberty. This civil liberty conſiſts in certain powers, privileges and immunities, either granted to the ſubjects by the government, or reſerved by them; where they, by a voluntary compact, delegate civil authority to the rulers.

There are not many inſtances in the world, where the people of a nation, do not poſſeſs as much liberty as they are capable of enjoying. Whenever the degree of light and information by them poſſeſſed, and their habits and manners render it beſt, that they ſhould have more liberty than they had before enjoyed, they will ſtruggle until they obtain it. As the pendulum ſwings one way and the other, at equal diſtances from the true point of gravitation, ſo mankind are conſtantly tending to extreme liberty, which in a multitude, is anarchy, or to abſolute ſlavery, which is oppoſed to every idea of perſonal freedom.

After

AFTER the Romans had conquered Europe, their ſucceſs having rendered them vain, debauched, and profligate, their empire became a prey to the northern tribes. A hardy, ſavage, and cruel kind of people, burſt from the north, in tribes, and brigands, aſſociated for the purpoſes of plunder and conqueſt, under their ſeveral leaders, and conquered Rome, and all her provinces. Theſe leaders divided the countries they conquered, as well the people as the ſoil, amongſt themſelves and their followers. The leaders of the conquerers became princes and lords, according to their ſeveral ranks, their followers became freemen, and the people conquered became vaſſals or ſlaves. From hence aroſe, on principles of fealty, allegiance and protection, the feudal ſyſtem. France, with all Europe, was then divided into principalities and dukedoms, many of which remain to this day.

THE *Capet Family* poſſeſſed the powerful dukedom, or principality of *Bourbonne*. From that ſtock the late royal family of France derived its origin. In the year of the chriſtian faith 991, Hugh Capet, the Duke of Bourbonne, was engaged in a bloody conteſt with John, Duke of Burgognne. The wife of Bourbonne, who was a German, had embraced the chriſtian religion, under the ſalutary tuition of the Biſhop of Rheims. The Duke was urged by the Biſhop to acknowledge the ſame faith, but his attention was taken up on other matters, ſo that he could by no means attend to ſo myſterious a novelty. Being hard preſſed by his enemy, on the day next preceding that, on which he expected a deciſive battle, he engaged to the Biſhop, that if his *God Jeſus* gave him the victory, he would become a chriſtian :

chriſtian: The battle was fought, and victory gave him the field. *

Immense preparations were immediately made for his initiation; he was baptiſed in the preſence of his whole army, and of an innumerable multitude of ſpectators. And what was of ſtill more conſequence, the Biſhop ſhewed a ſilver vial which the Angel Gabriel had ſent from Heaven by a Dove, containing oyl, with which the Duke, by being anointed with it, was changed to a monarch, receiving his kingdom by a decree of the Moſt High. † That phial, with a portion of the oyl unwaſted, and preſerved by a conſtant miracle, remained eight hundred years, and was in the cathedral at Paris, after the death of the late King. The French people have ſacrilegiouſly deſtroyed it, under the preſent revolution.

The Chriſtian religion, as taught by the biſhop of Rheims, when he baptized Hugh Capet, and as taught ſince that time in the Romiſh church, is the grand ſupporter of tyranny, and totally ſubverſive of all kind of civil liberty. Whilſt it allows the ſovereign a claim of power from a divine right, and independent of his people, it inculcates *non reſiſtance* and *paſſive obedience*, to the Prince, and complete infallibility in the church. Ignorance is made the mother of devotion, and the ſure baſis of allegiance: Under this idea, comparatively, few men in thoſe countries, where the Romiſh church is eſtabliſhed, can either read or write.

Wars between the kings and nobles, continually afflicted the country. The people were the ſufferers;

* *Preſident Hanault's hiſtory.*
† *Serre and Voltaire.*

ſufferers; for they were compelled to follow their maſters to battles, which could gain no advantages to the vaſſals. Let the victory be on which ſide it might, death was the only benefit which a ſlave could expect from the conflict; and even that hope was imbittered, by the idea, of leaving his poſterity, chains as an inheritance, and ſlavery as their patrimony.

THE conteſts finally ended in a ſubjection of the nobles to the monarch, with the priviledge of a negative upon his arrets,* or laws. The King became the advocate of freedom, and liberated his own vaſſals in order to compel the nobles to emancipate their's. This was good policy, becauſe that his ſlaves bore but a ſmall proportion, in numbers, to thoſe of the nobles, and he dreaded frequent inſurrections.

I SHALL paſs by the intermediate reigns, and bring my reflections to thoſe of Louis XIIIth, and his ſucceſſors; becauſe the tranſactions in thoſe, have a more immediate connexion with the Revolution.

* Acts of Legiſlation.

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

By an AMERICAN.

LETTER No. II.

THE Reign of Louis the thirteenth, was weak, miſerable, and unfortunate. He, with his ſucceſſor Louis the fourteenth, were devoted to the Catholic church; the former, from weakneſs, and the latter, from avarice and policy. Both, however, oppreſſed and perſecuted the Proteſtants, robbed them of their property, and either baniſhed, or cauſed them to be executed. This was no more than what Henry the eighth of England, did to the Catholics in that country; he deprived them of their privileges, and confiſcated their public and private, their ſacred and ſecular wealth. The inquiſition was in high force, in the reign of Louis the thirteenth, but it was in a great meaſure laid aſide in the reign of his immediate ſucceſſor.

THE reign of Louis the fourteenth, was notable for many great and important tranſactions. His battles were victorious, his conqueſts and enterpriſes extended his empire; commerce, under his patronage, gained an eſtabliſhment; a fleet was thrown upon the waters; the roads throughout the kingdom were repaired, and new roads made over mountains and moraſſes, which yet remain

remain to the ineſtimable eaſe and convenience of the nation. New ſources of revenue were found; yet, after all thoſe great exertions, the nation was involved in a debt, which could never be ſunk, and the intereſt of which has accumulated beyond all proſpect of payment.

The dominions acquired by Louis the fourteenth, were ſo vaſtly extenſive, that his ſucceſſor Louis the fifteenth, was involved in perpetual wars to defend and preſerve them. This rendered it impoſſible that he ſhould diſcharge the immenſe debt accumulated by his father. The adminiſtration of the Earl of Chatham in England, rendered the reign of this prince very inglorious, and ſtript him of a great part of his empire. In his reign, as well as in that of his father, the kingdom was in the hands, and under the direction of a favourite woman. Madam Pompadore, was the efficient ſovereign of France, for many years before the death of Louis the fifteenth. Madam Maintainon guided the empire in the reign of his father. The ſex have their full ſhare of empire in the European world; the preſent Emperor of Germany, has no other than a chambermaid government. Thus the ladies virtually repeal the ſalique law, which prohibits their wearing a crown; and though they cannot, oſtenſibly govern an empire, yet they direct the governors of it.

Louis the fifteenth, as he advanced in age, found it neceſſary, or at leaſt prudent, to form an alliance by marriage, for his grandſon, the laſt King of the Bourbonne race. The Houſe of Auſtria furniſhed a Queen for France. She was the moſt beautiful woman of her age, educated in the riot of a court, and under a high contempt

tempt for all who wore the character of a ſubject, either nobles or plebeians; the citizens, or the canaille. Moral reflexions found no reſidence in her boſom; but ſenſual enjoyment, intrigue, pride and coquetry, were the compotent parts of her character, and made up her life.

Louis the fifteenth, lived of courſe, but a ſhort ſpace of time after the Dauphin married the Princeſs of Auſtria. He had never received the ſmall pox, his averſion to inoculation was unconquerable; he endeavoured to avoid the diſeaſe, but took it and died of it. The manner in which he was affected has never been certainly known. It was ſaid, that as he was riding in his coach, he paſſed by a man who was ſick of the ſmall pox; but if that was true, no one can account either for his meeting that man in that place, or for his coming ſo near to him. When the King was expiring, and before Madam de Pompadore his favourite, and whom the young Queen hated implacably, had opportunity either to fly or to ſecure her jewels and treaſures, ſhe was arreſted and thrown into jail, and then into baniſhment, where ſhe languiſhed and died, and her property was ſeized to the young King's uſe.

As ſoon as Louis the ſixteenth was on the throne, he became inactive, ignorant of, and indifferent to the affairs of the nation. Gluttony and idleneſs, rendered him fat and torpid, and his whole mind was devoted to hunting, and to other pleaſures. The kingdom was thrown of courſe, into the hands of the Queen and her favourites, amongſt whom was the King's brother, the Duke de Artois; the moſt unprincipled, moſt cruel, and moſt abandoned young man in Europe. The improper connexion between this

young

young man and his brother's wife the Queen, was only whiſpered before the revolution, but all parties openly charge them now, and all parties equally deteſt that prince.

THOUGH there were fifteen years of peace, the people were deſtroyed with taxes; the nobles paid none; and all the rich men purchaſed nobilities to gain this exemption. Under the moſt cruel preſſure of taxation, neither the intereſt or principal of the public debt was attended to. The expences of the court amounted annually to fourteen millions of Louis d'ors, or guineas, and the revenue officers cheated the government as they pleaſed; the fleet and army were badly paid, and a diſtreſſing derangement of the finances ſucceeded.

SOMETIME after the late war, on the treaty with America, the diſtreſſes of the nation urged the King to employ Mr. Neckar, a Genevian, to attend to the finances. This great man, all the time he was at the head of the treaſury, was the object of the Queen's averſion, and the ſubject of her party's envy. All that his ſkill could ultimately accompliſh ſerved only to ſhew, that the nation had become bankrupt; that the public reſources were incompetent to the intereſt of the debt, that there was no ſource of revenue uneſſayed, and that reclaiming the expenſes of the court, and its dependences, furniſhed the only hope for the nation.

To a young Queen, who had been fed all her days on flattery, whoſe heart had no feelings for the ſufferings of the people or canaille, whom ſhe frequently cruſhed with the wheels of her carriage, this was an unpalatable idea.

THERE

THERE is ſomething in vicious pride, which works its own overthrow. Hence Solomon ſays, *that pride goeth before deſtruction, and a hearty ſpirit before a fall.* The Queen of France conſidered the Queen of England as her rival in the eſtimation of the world. She was determined to rob her of ſome of her glories. Therefore, when the Americans made an overture for a treaty offenſive and defenſive, with France againſt Great-Britain, the Queen and her party ſeized the opportunity, that England might be deprived of her provinces; but this very meaſure was the means of originating the French revolution. The Frenchmen, in their intercourſe with America, gained a taſte for civil freedom, and the Queen became, finally, the unhappy victim of her own pride and intrigues.

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LETTER No. III.

*Of the French Parliaments.**

"THE Courts of Juſtice in France, have been called Parliaments. Thoſe have been eſtabliſhed in all the provinces, and from which an appeal is had to the parliament of Paris, as to the ſupreme reſort. There was formerly another tribunal, called the court of Inquiſition, the juriſdiction of which extended only to religious matters. This was ſimilar to a court of religious juriſdiction formerly ſeen in England, that tried men for *hereſy* in religious opinions, and ſentenced them to death, when they were convicted: but the King there, iſſued the writs for the execution of the ſentence himſelf, purſuant to a ſtatute called the ſtatute de *hæretico comburendo*, in obedience to which writ, the unbeliever was burned at the ſtake. The grand Inquiſitor in France was independent of the King, deriving his powers from the Pope, he burned whom he pleaſed, independent of the civil authority of the nation."

THE

* This is taken from Voltaire's hiſtory of the Parliament of Paris.—Though this writer is, in ſome inſtances, deſervedly cenſured, yet all Europe agrees, that his hiſtory of the Age of Louis XIVth, and of the French Parliament, are correct, and that they do honor to him as an Author.

The Parliaments were governed by the arrets of the King, in civil and criminal matters, when they found any upon the ſubject matter of the cauſe, but the Judges opinion was generally, the law in each caſe. The uncertain tenure by which life was holden, rendered it hardly worth poſſeſſing, and as property depends upon ſecurity for its value, no one in France could be ſaid to have any.

The Parliament of Paris, beſides its judiciary authority, was one branch of the Legiſlature.—This prerogative, as the French writers inform us, aroſe from a compact between the King and the Nobles in the firſt reigns of the Capets, who dethroned the Pepins, and changed the dinaſty, and was intended as a check upon the monarch, to prevent his oppreſſing them, or ſtripping them of their privileges. This prerogative of the nobles, exerciſed in the parliament of Paris, was the main bulwark of their priviledges. The King could levy no tax without the conſent of that body, and hence the taxes were laid on the people; and the nobility, who held, at that time, nearly all the property of the nation, were excuſed from all public burdens. No doubt but that the ideas of ſuperiority of birth, the conſideration, that the body of the people who were taxable, had been releaſed from ſlavery, and that the merchants, and mechanics were dependent upon the licence of the ſovereign for the privilege of exerciſing their functions, ſatisfied the conſciences of the king and nobility, whilſt they were cruelly oppreſſing millions of their fellow men. This ſame Parliament of Paris claimed the right of licencing every literary production; and no one, under the pain of death, or baniſhment, dared to publiſh the

moſt

moſt indifferent unlicenced pamphlet. The writings of Philoſophers, are always favourable to humanity, and may be viewed as ſharp files to ſever the chains of ſlavery. An enlightened people can never be long holden in ſlavery. The king and nobility, therefore, made it a point of importance in the adminiſtration of government, to ſuppreſs all thoſe publications which had a tendency to open the eyes of the public to their ſituation. Thoſe writings which were calculated to inform the multitude, or to expoſe the intrigues, and corruption of the court, were ſentenced to be burned by the common hangman, and the authors were either tortured, hanged, baniſhed, or caſt into the baſtile, where they were forgotten and neglected, and from whence they never returned. Theſe ſentences were iſſued by the parliament of Paris; but nevertheleſs, as commerce was extended, the intercourſe with other nations furniſhed intelligence to Frenchmen. The ſentences for burning books, became at length a ſtrong recommendation for reading them, therefore the writers, to avoid perſecution, reſided in Geneva, or Switzerland, and ſent their books into France, where the burning of one copy by the order of the parliament, recommended the ſale and reading of a thouſand others. But this was done privately, becauſe the bare poſſeſſion of a book which had been condemned, was ſeverely puniſhed.

No arret of the King could become a law, until it was regiſtered by order of the Parliament of Paris. Theſe ſhackles were worn by the ſovereign, with great impatience, and frequent agitations. The only remedy which he had to overcome an oppoſition ſo odious to his habits,

was to baniſh the leaders, or by letters de cachet to commit them to the baſtile. Theſe remedies were frequently adopted, without convulſions, or public emotions. The King had an army; the people had no intereſt at hazard, for they were deſtined to bear the burden, let the ſupreme power be where it might. The precept called the *letters de cachet*, was uſed on great occaſions, and rather worſe than the ſtate warrant in England, for let whoever might be apprehended by it, he was without further inquiry, trial, or adjudication, thrown into a dungeon of the baſtile, there to languiſh, perhaps for life.

The late King, Louis the ſixteenth, was more firm, manly, and open with the Parliament. The Queen had ſeen no form of oppoſition to the Sovereigns in the Germanic empire. The almighty fiat of the Emperor precluded all debate, and admitted of no controverſy. She and her party, at once pointed the King to the path of unimpeded ſovereignty. Jealous of an injured and cruelly oppreſſed people, Frenchmen could not be truſted with the ſafety of the royal perſonages; the palaces were attended by guards from Switzerland; thouſands of which were paid, and ſerved as witneſſes, to prove to the world, that the King of France had no friends in his own nation; but that the great body of his natural ſubjects, were hoſtile to his family and government. Thus guarded and fortified, and under theſe unfortunate feelings, the King ſoon after his coronation, entered the parliament chamber, ſupported by a military force, and commanded the clerk of the parliament, to regiſter an arret which the parliament had refuſed to admit upon the rolls; and thus at one ſtroke, rendered himſelf abſolute, and above all

controul

controul and impediment. The King, nevertheleſs, paid ſo much regard to the ancient inſtitutions of the kingdom, that he never demanded a tax of the Nobles.

THIS abolition of the legiſlative ariſtocracy of the nation, was finally the deſtruction of Louis, and of her, who had been the author of all his meaſures. The nobles being, as to power, reduced to a level with the ſuffering multitude, could not fail to excite the people to diſquiet, diſcontent, and inſurrections.

BEFORE I proceed to a review of the tranſactions of the revolution, I ſhall attend to the condition of the people of France, as to their habits and education, at that important period.

A REVIEW

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY AN AMERICAN.

LETTER No. IV.

THE torpid lake, ſecured by its ancient banks, knows no other than the ſuperficial agitations of the gentle breezes, or the ſtorms of ſhort duration: but as ſoon as the ſurrounding limits are broken, the long impriſoned floods, in violent ſtruggles, obtain that freedom to which their natural gravity had forever urged them. Burſting, in a torrent, they forſake their ancient bed, and overbearing every obſtacle, the mountains are ſubverted before them, and the rocks are hurled forward in reluctant movements, from the place of their creation. The leſſer ſtreams, attach their currents to the brooks and rivulets, which ſwell the increaſing river, and aid the tumult with their obſequious waters. The torrent, in ſtrong collection, exhibits a motly mixture of every colour, of every ſubſtance, and confined to no channel, it ſpreads wild deſtruction over the devoted country. This is the image of a national revolution; and theſe the conſequences of a long eſtabliſhed tyranny.

THERE is, ſcarcely an inſtance, wherein a full allowance, or an accurate calculation is made for the education and habits of mankind. The eye of philoſophy, with painful labour, has diſcovered the

the path of rectitude for human nature, and the point, when described, being eaſily diſcerned by the maſs of mankind, each one can obſerve how far his neighbour is from it; but cannot calculate as to his own diſtance, or count upon his own errors.

EDUCATION forms the man. Thoſe things which are moſt laudable in one country, are moſt deteſtable in another. In America, any kind of expoſure of a woman, in company of men, is diſgraceful in the extreme. In Ruſſia, the women and men occupy the warm baths promiſcuouſly, without a charge of indecency, or a temptation to incontinency. In America, ſuicide and murder, are held in the utmoſt abhorrence; but in India, the widow throws herſelf on the body of her deceaſed huſband, and her father, in a religious ceremony, kindles the fire which conſumes both. In America, poligamy is ſeverely puniſhed; when in Turky, it is diſreputable to have but one wife. In America, we avoid touching a dead body; but in ſome parts of the world, human fleſh is the choiceſt repaſt. We may eaſily imagine, one man burning at the ſtake in England, in former times, for nonconformity to the common prayer; and another on the rack in France, for hereſy, as to the doctrines of the church of Rome; another torn with pincers, in Spain, for being a Jew, or a Mahometan; and another drawn in pieces by wild horſes in Turky for being a chriſtian; and all theſe rejoicing at their own cataſtrophe, and being full of aſſurance that a reward awaits their painful exit: this has actually happened, and perhaps on the ſame day.

PREJUDICES in politics inſert themſelves into the human mind, in the ſame manner as they are ſeen in matters of religion and morals.

A NATION is formed by mere accident. An aſſociated number, following a choſen leader, and held together by the bands of neceſſity, may grow into a powerful nation. Such were the Trojans, who followed Eneas, to form the Roman empire; and ſuch the tribe who were lead by Ulyſſes, to form the Grecian ſtates. Other circumſtances orignate nations; ſuch as the colonization from a crowded territory, or a diviſion of an empire amongſt contending great men. But, be their origin what it may, a concentration of the opinion of the whole forms the nation, and eſtabliſhes its boundaries.

To form a nation, there muſt be a public opinion, the ſtability and proſperity of it, depends eſſentially upon the rectitude and permanency of that opinion. When the maſs of the people are ignorant, poor and miſerable, there is no public opinion excepting what is the offspring of fear. Whenever a balance is found for that, there is an end of the government. A government of terror, and a government of the feelings of intereſt, are eſſentially different. As mankind are naturally attached to property, the ſureſt way to make them good ſubjects, is to make it for their intereſt to be ſuch. After theſe deſultory reflections, we come to the point before us, in a more direct line.

THE religious maxim in France, for eight hundred years together, was that *ignorance is the mother of devotion.* The political tenet adopted and eſtabliſhed, is, that a paſſive obedience to the will of the ſovereign is meritorious and proper; but that an inquiry into the origin of civil authority, or an examination of the rectitude of its adminiſtration, is an heinous offence.

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The civil authority guarded the church as infallible, and holy, and the church anathematized all who did not confeſs, that the powers which *be are ordained of God.* Literature was condemned as a deteſtable innovation, and all religious and political inveſtigations, were the objects of the moſt ſevere puniſhments. Thus in a nation of twenty-five millions of people, not more perhaps, than four millions, could either read or write; and not ten in a million would dare to enter upon an inveſtigation of the civil privileges of the members of the nation, or of the religious rights of individuals as men. Thoſe who attempted the important taſk, were hanged, impriſoned, or baniſhed.

The conqueſt of Europe, by the Goths and Vandals, introduced a chimerical idea, of imaginary diſtinctions amongſt mankind. The leaders in that conqueſt, were conſidered as great men, and their oldeſt ſons were generally acknowledged as their proper ſucceſſors. This was done to avoid parties and bloody conteſts, which would have taken place in thoſe barbarous ages, amongſt the numerous competitors, whoſe claims could be decided in no other manner, than by a ſuperior force. The people under this idea, and compelled by this neceſſity, frequently ſubmitted to receive a ruler, who had neither integrity, or ability. In the declaration of rights prefixed to the conſtitution of the commonwealth of Maſſachuſetts, it is wiſely aſſerted *that the idea of a man's being born a ruler or a judge, is unnatural, abſurd, and ridiculous.* It is ſaid that this prudent and learned ſentiment, was placed there by the pen of the preſent Preſident of the United States. That great man will never change his ſentiments,

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and become the advocate of hereditary power, in his own country.

In France, the great object of the Church was wealth, and infinite ſums of money, were extorted from the fears, and pillaged from the hopes of the people. The religion inculcated was altogether applied to the ſenſes of the multitude. Miracles were to be credited, the pardon of ſins by the prieſts to be realized, and the commiſſion of the moſt heinous offences, under a purchaſed diſpenſation, to be conſidered as intirely innocent. Whilſt thoſe abſurd enormities were improved by the church, to ſupport the tyranny of the monarch, the civil and religious powers were intirely united. The people were wretched, but they were the mere chattles of the ſovereign, dependent upon his will for life, and for whatever they happened to poſſeſs or to enjoy.

But here it may be aſked, why the people were wretched? they had the neceſſaries of life in ſuch a meaſure as to exiſt. They had their village ſongs, and their feſtival days. They were remarkable for their cheerfulneſs, and had none of thoſe anxious and diſtreſſing hours which torment the prince, the ſtateſman, and the man of ambition. There is certainly a difficulty in anſwering this queſtion; for it can be readily proved, that the ſlave chained to the oar, may have leſs miſery than the monarch who is ſupported by his toil. Were we to examine the various ranks of mankind, in order to find with whom the greateſt ſhare of happineſs is depoſited, I do not venture a conjecture on the point, where it would ultimately be found to reſide; and yet we cannot conſent, that one man ſhould deprive another of his liberty, that he might make him happier as a ſlave, than he would be as a free man.

NOTWITHSTANDING

NOTWITHSTANDING the ſtrange idea of a ſuperiority by birth, and blood, and all the ridicule which has been lately thrown upon the idea of a a natural equality in mankind. Yet, upon that principle, all political juſtice reſts, as upon its natural and only foundation. This important principle, may have been miſuſed, and abuſed, as all moral principles may be; and he who aſſerts that there is no inequality as to ſtrength, natural underſtanding, or advantages of education amongſt mankind, is a fool; but he who ſays, that as to civil authority, all men are born equal, and that no one by the accident of birth, can derive authority to govern others, is clearly right. Here again it is conceded, that if by the national conſtitution, the oldeſt, or either ſon of a monarch, is to ſucceed his father, he may be ſaid to gain his power by birth; but ſtill it is the will of the people, however abſurd, and ridiculous it may be, that places him on the throne, and gives him his authority.

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

By an AMERICAN.

LETTER No. V.

BY the reflections contained in the preceding letters, the ſtate and condition of the French people, at the beginning of the French revolution are diſcloſed.

The writers upon this, and other revolutions, generally treat upon the characters of the leaders on each ſide; deſcribe with great accuracy the means of victory, or the cauſes of a defeat; but do not developę the origin of the revolution, or give to the public thoſe principles, on which the attempt may be either condemned, or applauded. It is intended in theſe reflections, that neither the characters of the Duke of Orleans, the Biſhop of Autenne, the Marquis of Fayette, the Duke de Laincour, Briſſot, or Robeſpierre, Pichegru, Dumourier or Buonaparte, ſhall be examined; but that the intereſt, the views, the motives, and meaſures, of the various parties, ſhall be explained, in a uſeful and inſtructive manner.

At the awful moment of introducing a French revolution in 1791, the leaders of the revolutioniſts, had no intention of any thing more than the effecting a reform in the government. The King had robbed the Parliament, and Nobility, of the ſmall remains of power which they poſſeſſed at the beginning

beginning of his reign, and had rendered the royal authority unlimited and abſolute. This authority he had no capacity to exerciſe, and it was therefore delivered over to the Queen. There was then no other emulation in the nation than that of being rendered moſt agreeable to a haughty, intriguing, and unprincipled woman. The few who fattened on her ſmiles, and rioted in her favours, were the objects of revenge to the reſt of the nobility, whom in an air of triumph, they repaid with contempt, and deriſion. Nothing but the ſtrength of the army, could awe the malcontents into ſilence. If the Nobles united, had attempted by their own ſtrength, to contend with the Court, their ruin was inevitable. Nothing, therefore remained, but an attempt to turn the public opinion againſt the Court, and to rouſe the people by a ſenſe of their oppreſſions, to an oppoſition to a tyranny, under which they had ſubmitted to for ages.

Under this idea, a Convention was called. The people were repreſented in a numerous aſſembly, which had no deſcription to its authority, nor any bounds to its exertions. Ah, wretched and miſtaken Nobility! why did you not reflect, that your powers were as unnatural as thoſe of the Monarch; and that you, in your turn, had been, and yet were equally the oppreſſors of the multitude of the people?

When this Convention had been collected, a ſyſtem called a conſtitution of mixed Monarchy was propoſed. By this, the Nobles would have again been reſtored by a repreſentation to an active part in the Legiſlature, and the prerogatives of the Sovereign curtailed. Amidſt the preſſing croud of demandants, the King took a ſolemn oath,

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to maintain that as a national Conſtitution of government. But of what avail are the moſt ſolemn oaths, in a country, where the firſt principles of education are, that the higheſt crime may be pardoned by the prieſt for a competent ſum of money, and the moſt flagitious enormities paſs unpuniſhed, in this, and the other world, if the church's diſpenſation is obtained. In the caſe before us, the pardon was ready, and no diſpenſation was neceſſary; for, as the power of the church was in hazard, the violation of oaths, however ſacred, muſt be an act of religion. The King, therefore, did not incline to keep his engagement.

The cauſe was now brought to a criſis: If the royal power ſhould again be reinſtated, all who had been active in the reformation of the government were ruined. This urged the Nobles, who had been concerned in the ſcheme, to ſtimulate the multitude to ſuch violences as ſhould compel the King into a compliance. The Baſtile was the moſt obnoxious object to the popular reſentment, and the acting Nobles pointed the rage of the multitude againſt that. The King at that time, was ſhut up by the Queen and her party, in the palace, ſurrounded by the Swiſs guards, ſo that no acceſs was had to him. Three days the multitude were engaged in the demolition of the baſtile, and the King was totally ignorant of the operations. The Queen was collecting the reluctant army, to quell the mobs, which were hourly encreaſing. The rage of the people was infinitely increaſed by the miſerable objects which conſtantly opened upon their view, as they made their progreſs into that *grave of the living*. Men who had been there ſo long, that they had forgotten the time of their commitment,

commitment, white with age, they knew not why they had thus been ſevered from the land of the living; and worn out with grief, they no longer remembered their once tender connexions, or their own names. In this moment, the Duke de Laincour, who had been one of the convention, and was hereditary chamberlain to the king, forced his way to the royal bed-chamber, and at midnight informed the torpid monarch of his danger. The King reluctantly aroſe, and ſluggiſhly followed his guide to the convention, and there again renewed his oath to maintain the propoſed conſtitution. But where has hiſtory given an inſtance of a monarch's keeping a compact to abridge his royal prerogatives? The King of France derived his crown through twenty-ſeven anceſtors from Hugh Capet, the firſt King of the Bourbonne race. The throne was the gift of God, and the prerogatives of the ſovereign, were held by a divine right. Every attempt, therefore, to compel the monarch to relinquiſh a part, was clearly in his opinion, and in the opinion of the church, an unjuſtifiable piece of dureſs, from which no moral obligation could reſult.

Soon after this ſecond compact was made, the mobs were diſperſed, and a degree of peace and tranquility was enjoyed in the capital. Upon this, the King, who was but the feſcue of the Queen, intending to overthrow the whole, and to bring thoſe who had thus inſulted his royal dignity, to condign puniſhment, fled to Verſailles, to join the army which had been there collected to receive him. But alarmed at what was pronounced to be an act of perfidy, the multitude impeded his progreſs, and finally returned him to the palace in Paris, where he remained as a priſoner. The Queen was alſo confined, the Swiſs guards diſ-

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placed, and others who could be truſted by the convention, occupied their places.

THIS was a ſingular, an awful, an important criſis. A King was dethroned, and impriſoned; the walls of the palace could hold him, but no oaths or compacts, however ſolemnly made, could bind him for a day. Should he again poſſeſs his former authority, the lives of all the leaders in the rebellion would make but a ſmall compenſation for the inſults offered to royalty. Examples, ſuch as would prevent another commotion, even to the cutting off of millions, was viewed as the beaten track of court policy.

THE Nobility had now come to their *ne plus ultra*. If they deſtroyed the King, his ſon muſt be his ſucceſſor, and his mother the regent. Should they attempt to change the dinaſty, and like the Engliſh, obtain a maſter from another nation, the people were not ripe to ſupport the attempt, and all the monarchs in Europe appeared to be arming in favour of inſulted royalty.

THE Nobles, therefore, continued to attempt an imbecile and ridiculous negociation with the King, whilſt he was intriguing with the courts in Europe for ſupport in regaining his abſolute and unlimitted ſovereignty. The powers of the convention, as an aſſembly to form a government upon the principles of a mixed monarchy, became contemptible, and inefficient. The body of the people diſcovered that many of theſe leaders had no ſhare of patriotiſm, nor any regard to the happineſs of the nation, as a people; and that if they could contrive with the King to ſave their own necks, and to ſhare the tyranny with him, there would be no regard paid to the ſufferings of the multitude.

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY AN AMERICAN.

LETTER No. VI.

THE criſis now became aſtoniſhingly important: There was no hope of ſucceſs in the original project, but there was no way to retreat. Tallyrand, Fayette, DeLaincour, and their party, wiſhed in vain to be where they had been before the attempt was made. The Marquis, under a groundleſs hope, to form a retreat from the ſtandard of liberty, loſt the confidence of the revoluſtioniſts, and has ſince that time, been equally uſeleſs to both parties. Both treat him as a man whoſe importance is no longer to be calculated upon.

There was in France, when the King was made a priſoner, ſeveral parties; each of which was purſuing a different object. The nobility wanted a mixed monarchy, in order to raiſe their order into importance. The Briſſotine party, wanted a ſubverſion of hereditary authority, and a conſtitution ſimilar to thoſe which Briſſot had ſeen in America. The Robeſpierre party contended for the rule and controul, without law, conſtitution or reſtraint. Each party was equally engaged to deſtroy the King and Queen. If the King ſhould be reſtored, the nobles who had at firſt broken up the fountains of the great deep, were

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to anſwer for the commotions with their lives. If the King died, his ſon would be King *de Jure*, but his implacable and ambitious mother would have the reins of government. This would be no leſs fatal to the inſurgent nobles, than the life and reſtoration of the King would be. But if the King and Queen were cut off, their ſon might be in other hands. The King's oldeſt brother was a weak, imbecile man, the other brother the Duke de Artois, was a profligate, abandoned prince, whom the nation deſpiſed and hated. The King's daughter was excluded by the ſalique law from the crown, and the Duke of Orleans had contemptibly declared himſelf a partizan for the revolution.

The leaders of the people had further views; they knew that nothing would ſave them, but an entire revolution. A diviſion of the other parties, would give the royaliſts an opportunity to re-eſtabliſh the regal government. Neceſſity, that never failing chain of events, held them all fixed to one object; the deſtruction of the King and Queen. Here the calm eye of pity ſearches in vain, for an alternative, to divert the path from ſcenes of horror. Mankind, when enraged, are blind to reaſon, and deaf to prudence. The aſſociation of a daring and determined multitude, affords a fervour of ſpirit, and an ardour for enterpriſe, which the cool invocations of diſcretion cannot countervail.

Robespierre, a bold, daring, intrepid man, was by theſe qualifications brought forward as a leader in the tragic ſcenes which were to follow. A ſummary trial, without any law but that of ſelf-preſervation, and without any other juſtice than the neceſſity of the occaſion, deprived the

royal

royal perſonages of life. This mode of expreſſion may be conſtrued as a ſtrong cenſure upon the ſanguinary proceedings, but I ſhall explain myſelf. The fountains of the great deep were broken up, wild anarchy, and horrid confuſion covered the face of the nation; the proceſs againſt the government, and in favour of a revolution, had been carried ſo far, that there could be no compromiſe. The party then prevailing, muſt either die themſelves, or prevent the other party from prevailing againſt them in their turn. *Skin for ſkin*, ſays a writer, all that a man hath he will give for his life. The cenſure then is upon the exigency, and not on the fact.

THERE have been a great variety of inſtances in political movements, where the parties have found themſelves carried to an exceſs, of which they had no idea in the beginning of the conteſt; "and the calm ſea wonders at the wrecks it made." When the patriots of America began their controverſy with Great Britain, *Independence* was no part of their plan. Indeed no one upon a diſpaſſionate calculation, could have expected it. The object could never have been attained, if France had not lent her aid, and this was not then within the reach of any reaſonable calculation. But the project happening to be agreeable to the Queen, it became a meaſure of the adminiſtration of courſe.

THOSE who condemn Robeſpierre and his party, are obliged to found their reaſoning upon the impropriety of the firſt attempt for a reformation, made by Fayette and others, for if the violent party who took the lives of the King and Queen, naturally, and neceſſarily, grew out of that, which originated the Revolution, and if there was no way to retreat, no method of compromiſe, or hope

of ſaving their own lives, without accompliſhing a thorough revolution, the meaſure become neceſſary. To expect a popular government upon the foundation of a revolution, whilſt the dethroned monarch was alive, has in other inſtances, been found from experience, to be but a fruitleſs chimera.

As ſoon as the King was executed, great pains were taken by the royal party, to affect the public mind with the odiouſneſs of the fact. Where the tale was ſimply rehearſed, or merely read, it made but little impreſſion. The human mind is ſo conſtructed that it gains ſtrength by no other than practical means, and the impreſſions made by external objects depend principally upon their being conveyed through the channel to which the mind has been habituated. The Prieſts in France had always addreſſed themſelves to the ſenſes of the multitude; no abſtract argument, or analogical propoſitions, had been ſubmitted to the reaſoning of the people. The repreſentation of the Saviour of the world in his agonies on the croſs, from the beſt painters, the pictures of the Apoſtles in their preaching, and under the perſecutions which they ſuffered, were conſidered as full evidences of chriſtianity, and the Images of holy ſaints were received in the place of moral precepts. The Royaliſts, therefore, in order to ſupport their party in the public opinion, exhibited, in ſtrong colours, the King as ſuffering in his impriſonment, as taking his laſt, and moſt affecting farewell of his wife and children, and as headleſs on the Guillotine.—On the other hand, the leaders of the revolution, exhibited pictures of men, who had been chained in the Baſtile for many years, and other repreſentations of the cruelties of that tyranny,

tyranny, which they had ſubverted. The chains of tyranny, were painted by the beſt artiſts, and deſcribed by the beſt writers, in the moſt diſguſting manner, and exceedingly heightened by their being realized as the hereditary patrimony of that generation who had overturned the miſerable ſtate of ſlavery in which the nation had been involved for many centuries. Thus both maintained an influence with their parties; but the apparently prevailing party, gained the beſt ſtanding, and the greateſt acceſſion of friends. In the natural world, the ſmall ſtreams all move forward to mingle with, and to be loſt in the great river. When that ſwells its torrent, they, as if moved by a natural ſympathy, overflow their banks; and that in its turn, as if urged by gratitude, readily receives their currents, whether foul or fair, clear or turbid. Thus in the conteſt on political revolutions, the party prevailing, attaches to itſelf, the ſmall, the weak, and the miſerable, the virtuous and the vicious, and gladly opens its boſom to all.

The word Liberty has the moſt lively expectations of happineſs attached to it, but it is in fact an indefinite expreſſion. Natural liberty is every where underſtood, but that which is *civil liberty* in one country, is a deſtructive evil in another; and that which would be *civil freedom* to people under one ſpecies of habits, and one mode of education, would be anarchy and miſery to another.

Civil liberty has no other definition, than the enjoyment of certain rights, immunities and privileges, according to permanent conſtitutional, or legal eſtabliſhments. Where there is no fixed conſtitution or legal eſtabliſhments, limitting and defining the various powers of the government, there can be no civil liberty.

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THE Frenchmen huzzaed for liberty, but they had no competent ideas reſpecting it. Their minds had never been engaged in contemplating the ſubject, for as it depends upon the lines and principles of the civil national compact, and as the French had no acquaintance with a ſyſtem of that nature, they were only offering ſacrifices to a deity of which they had but lately heard, of whom the voice of nature loudly proclaimed, but of which they had at that time, no perfect image in their minds.

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

By an AMERICAN.

LETTER No. VII.

THE parties engaged in favour of the French revolution, after they had diſpatched the King and Queen, had other objects, againſt which their intereſt was neceſſarily united. The exiled nobles, and their adherents, were by no means ſubdued; they were expelled, but that expulſion collected them round the ſtandard of royalty. They were, where they could be moſt active, by external operations, againſt the Revolutioniſts.

THE Prieſts were a numerous, inexorable, ſubtil, and influential ſet of men; to ſubvert their order, and influence, was of courſe, an object of magnitude. This order of men, had cruelly oppreſſed the people for centuries, and in the reigns of Louis the fifteenth and ſixteenth, had become the ſubjects of the ſatirical pens of Voltaire, and others. The enlightened part of the nation were generally Deiſts, becauſe they hated and deſpiſed the fraud and chicanery of the prieſthood. Indeed where a religion is not left in the common courſe of nature, after it is ſufficiently promulged, but is pretendedly ſupported by miraculous interpoſitions of the Deity, and yet exerciſed in ſuch a manner, as to render nations conſiſting of millions, wretched, ignorant, poor, and miſerable, a ſober, enlightened

lightened man, muſt neceſſarily hold it in the the moſt abſolute abhorrence. The irreverence, with which the catholic religion was treated by the court, in the reign of the late King, naturally led the people at large, to hold it in contempt.

To effect a thorough revolution in the religious inſtitutions of that country, or rather to effect an entire ſubverſion of the power of the Prieſts, it was neceſſary to begin at the root, and to overturn the authority of the Pope. The firſt object was, to take off the people's attention from the religious ceremonies which had been preſcribed to them. Pope Gregory the thirteenth had formed a calendar for dividing the time into years, months and weeks, and had ordered an obſervation of it throughout the chriſtian world. The firſt calendar, is ſaid to have been formed by Romulus the founder of the Roman empire. This was corrected, or reformed by Numa Pompilius, and improved by Julius Cæſar, from whence it took the appellation of the Julian Calendar. The proteſtant countries received this, until the year 1700, when it was corrected and made agreeable to that which had been ordered by the Pope. The Engliſh nation received it in the year 1752, whence aroſe the diſtinction between the old and new ſtile.

The Primitive chriſtians, ſoon after the death of our Saviour, were uſed to aſſemble themſelves together, upon the firſt day of the week. That day, if there was any ſuch thing as a perfect calendar, (which Tycho, Brache, and other learned men think there never can be) or a correct computation of time, happens on our Sunday. From this circumſtance, the day has, in the northern part of the United States, with very great pro-

priety,

priety, been conſidered and ſeparated as holy time. The day has been kept in many inſtances, with all that ſolemnity, which the Jews enjoined for Saturday, which was their Sabbath: but the French people have always kept it, rather as a day of joy and feſtivity.

The Revolutioniſts in France, conſidered it as important to overturn every veſtige of the Pope's power; and therefore formed a new calendar, and aboliſhed the edict which had made a Sabbath of the firſt day of the week, declared the pretended authorities of the church, to be an unjuſtifiable impoſition upon the people, and baniſhed the prieſts. Nevertheleſs every one was allowed, and ſtill retains the liberty to worſhip God as he pleaſes, and to conſider ſuch time as holy, as the dictates of his conſcience points him to. Yet the leaders in the revolution took great pains to render the profeſſion of the chriſtian religion diſreputable: and in oppoſition to the doctrines of the Trinity, by inſcriptions over the doors of the houſes of public worſhip, dedicated them to the ONE GOD.

Revolutions of the nature of this, ſo far as it reſpected the power of the Pope, were no novelties. One of a ſimilar kind happened in England, in the reign of Henry the eighth, who confiſcated the vaſt wealth of the churches and clergy. Again, in 1688, upon what was called a revolution in England, an oath of abjuration was exacted of every one who held a civil office. Similar to which, an oath is provided in the conſtitution of Maſſachuſetts, for every officer of every denomination. Theſe are obliged on their appointment, to ſwear, that no foreign prince, prelate, or potentate, hath, or ought to have, any authority, pre-eminence, or juriſdiction, in the ſtate. And

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further, that no one has a right to abſolve them from the obligation of that oath. This was borrowed from the Engliſh teſt acts, and was intended here after the revolution, to exclude the very influential authority of the Engliſh Biſhops, who conſidered the King as the ſupreme earthly head of the church.

Some of the people in America, became exceedingly alarmed at theſe proceedings in France. They conſidered chriſtianity itſelf, as being in the greateſt danger, and therefore became unfriendly to the French revolution. They had always prayed for the overthrow of the papal power; and had conſidered the Pope as the Man of Sin ſpoken of in the Revelations. Many learned Divines had ſpent much time in calculating from the Jewiſh prophets, and thoſe propheſies in the revelations of St. John the Divine, when this great event would happen. As each one was fully perſuaded in his opinion, that his ſect or denomination was more perfect than the others, his humanity would urge him to wiſh, and pray, that the mild and gentle influences of the Goſpel, might, without any civil commotions, or bloody wars, change the hearts of the catholicks to his mode of worſhip, and to his principles of faith. But the way in which this overthrow was, by an alwiſe Providence effected, did not comport with their plans. There ſtill, however, may be a queſtion, whether as the powers that now ſubſiſt in France, do not perſecute any one for his religious opinions, or exclude any one from office or place, for being a chriſtian, but allow every one to keep the portion of time as holy, which he chuſes, and to worſhip in his own way, the pure ſpirit of chriſtianity may not prevail there, more efficaciouſly under this

government,

government, than it hath heretofore done under the influence of corruption and tyranny.

In the conſtitution of the United States, nothing is ſaid in regard to Religion. In that of Maſſachuſetts, it is expreſsly provided, that no one ſhall be compelled to worſhip contrary to the dictates of his own conſcience, and that no perſon ſhall be injured for worſhipping in the mode moſt agreeable to him. But the towns, pariſhes and corporations, are obliged to ſupport public teachers of piety, religion and morality. When the people formed this ſyſtem, they wiſely apprehended, that no exertion of civil authority could be neceſſary to enforce or recommend the Chriſtian religion, to an enlightened, civilized and morally inſtructed people.

Thus, that power, which had afflicted the people of Europe, for more than one thouſand years, which had made credulity and ignorance the cardinal virtues of chriſtianity, which had wrapt all Europe in a darkneſs that might be felt, that power which had tortured millions on the rack, burned millions at the ſtake, without cauſe, was proſtrated at a ſtroke and became as imbecile and harmleſs as the timid fawn, and is ſunk never more to enchain the nations in ignorance and miſery.

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

By an AMERICAN.

LETTER No. VIII.

THE Royal Perſonages being diſpoſed of, and the power of the Pope and the Church, being ſubverted, the world might have ſuppoſed the revolution to have been accompliſhed, and peace, with all its ineſtimable bleſſings, to have been at the door of the nation. But the people were now to enter upon ſcenes of which, they had conceived no idea. The common enemy being vanquiſhed, the parties who had before been from neceſſity, united, began to exhibit the ſtrong lines of a deadly partition, which ſeparated their intereſts, and conſequently their opinions. It was in vain to think of a union from reaſon and argument; each aſſumed the ſhape of patriotiſm, and charged the others with hoſtile intentions to the liberties of the people. The Nobility, who had been amongſt the original movers of the plan, and aſſociated with the patriots, and taken at the firſt a part in the revolution, found they had no kind of ſupport. The idea of natural equality had made its way into the public opinion, and the unnatural eſtabliſhment of a precedency by birth, had proportionably loſt its ſtanding. Beſides this, as ſoon as the people had an opportunity to compare the abilities of other characters with theirs, they loſt their conſequence and importance.

The Nobles were compelled of neceſſity to relinquiſh their pre-eminency, and to declare themſelves on a level with the people. Should they fly, they would ſhare the fate of Fayette, and others, and be thrown into a loathſome priſon. The royal party would not receive them, and they could remain with the revolutioniſts on no other than the democratic principle of national equality. The latter was their choice; whatever their views might be, they aſſumed the cockade of equality, with alacrity, and made great profeſſions of pleaſure and ſatisfaction.

This had by no means the effect which was calculated for its conſequences; there could be no ſyſtem whilſt thoſe fatal diviſions remained. Robeſpierre therefore, with an extraordinary degree of addreſs and energy, introduced a government founded in the feelings of terror. The blood of the people ſeemed to flow without reaſon or juſtification. Here was a criſis, when public and private revenge, had a full opportunity to diſplay itſelf. Robeſpierre courted the aid of every one who had an arm for the ſword; and of conſequence, was obliged to gratify the ambition, and to ſatiate the malice of every ſmall party and connection, as well as of each individual who adhered to his authority. A wild phrenzy ſeized the whole nation, and mock trials, horrid executions, ſecret aſſaſſinations, waſted more than two millions of people. If Robeſpierre began under an idea, that the whole oppoſition muſt be extirpated by the ſword, before the republic could be eſtabliſhed, perhaps, there was in theory great colour for the ſuppoſition: but he was practically wrong. To gratify his own ambition, and to ſatiate, or rather to indulge the dreadful re-

venge

venge of ſome of his followers, he ſlaughtered the democrats and revolutioniſts, promiſcuouſly with the others. Thoſe who had declared in favour of equality, and had taken a decided part in the revolution, found the guillotine as ready for them as it was for others. There was no apparent limits to the ſacrifices, no one knew where, or who, or for what, would be the next victim.

THERE was then no kind of conſtitution, or any article of legiſlation, by which crimes were defined, trials governed, or puniſhments regulated. But the popular voice given from an unknown multitude, bore down every attempt to reaſon on the national calamities. An attempt to check the dreadful rage was a capital offence.

AMIDST all this confuſion, uproar, and tumult, the enthuſiaſm of the nation, filled and ſupported the armies, for an external defence againſt all the Monarchs in Europe, who had combined againſt it; ſtill there was no object before the people. They talked loud of liberty; but liberty in its natural extent, and complection, has nothing to do with civil ſociety. There is in nature the ſame degree of diſſimilarity between natural liberty and thoſe principles of equal ſecurity exhibited in a well regulated ſociety as there is between the untouched clay in the earth, and the finer veſſels of China. The Conſtitution formed by the conſtituent aſſembly, and which had been fooliſhly overthrown by the King, was done away. One democratic, confuſed and motly aſſembly, had aſſumed the ſupreme authority, without rule, meaſure, or even the appearance of juſtice.

THE war of parties filled the nation with aſtoniſhment and terror. So much blood had been ſhed under the authority of mock trials, that each

man

man began to tremble for his own ſafety, becauſe, that there was no one without his enemies. The man who would dare to interrupt this terrible maſſacre, muſt do it at the hazard of his own life; if he failed in the attempt he was ruined.

We may reaſonably imagine, that there were, in that rude and turbulent convention, ſome men, who had a degree of apprehenſion for the ſituation of the nation, as well as for their own perſonal danger, to open their minds, confidentially on the ſubject. Thus, in the natural, and uſual manner, the circle grew wider and wider, until a reſolution was adopted to oppoſe Robeſpierre and his adherents.

These men, by their ſanguinary meaſures, had by that time, become the common enemy of all parties, in the ſame manner as the Royaliſts had been in former years; and all the nation had become their enemies. Marat was the moſt powerful and moſt indefatigable miniſter, who was attached to the ſupport of Robeſpierre. A young woman ſeized with the common phrenzy, left her parents, and walked from the country ſeventy of our miles to Paris, introduced herſelf to Marat, with a concealed dagger in her poſſeſſion, whilſt he was in the warm bath, aſſaſſinated him inſtantly, and chearfully ſubmitted her neck to the guillotine for the deed.

Matters now had taken ſuch a turn, and the public opinion being well prepared for a change, Tallien ventured in the Convention to announce Robeſpierre as an enemy to the nation, and a traitor to the liberty of the people. This man, whoſe mountain, but a few days before, appeared immoveably ſtrong, was at once found without ſupport, and all his authority was ſubverted at a breath.

breath. He was ſeized, led as a priſoner to the common priſon of malefactors, tried as he had cauſed others to be tried, and ſentenced to ſuffer as he had before cauſed millions to ſuffer.

A few minutes before his execution, he attempted to deſtroy his own life, and for that purpoſe, diſcharged a piſtol into his own head, but the ſhot was not fatal, he lived to paſs through the proceſs of the guillotine.

If Robeſpierre was a man of firmneſs, and poſſeſſed all the pride, ambition and ferocity, which may, from his conduct, be aſcribed to him, it is very ſtrange, that he had not, in a more certain and effectual method, accompliſhed the fact of ſuicide, whilſt he was in priſon, and before he was led forth to public execution as a malefactor.

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY AN AMERICAN.

LETTER No. IX.

THE mind, aſtoniſhed at the ſcenes which have been exhibited, would naturally be engaged to inquire, where the new arms of the royal family were depoſited, whilſt this ſtorm raged with ſuch ſanguinary violence?

WHEN the King of France was firſt called upon to ratify the conſtitution of 1791, which was ſo diſagreeable to his feelings, the influence of the Queen with her brother, the Emperor of Germany, raiſed him in favour of the King, and againſt the Reformiſts. The aſſurances of the Emperor, as was then believed, were conſidered as ſufficient to deter the mad Republicans, and to unite the monarchy men in favour of the former government. The King of England by a ſpecial miſſion, informed the leaders of the revolution, that he ſhould conſider any injury, which ſhould be done to the King of France, as if done to himſelf, and that he ſhould ſeverely chaſtiſe every inſult offered to monarchical power thro' the perſon of the French King. This was not done from a ſenſe of juſtice to that unfortunate monarch, but in order to check the ſpirit of liberty which then raged in France, and if poſſible to prevent its ſpreading in England.

THERE

THERE were great numbers then on the Britiſh iſland, who began to agitate the old queſtion of an equality of the Repreſentation in parliament: and many others were for an entire revolution, and a proſtration of all hereditary authority. Addreſſes for new arrangements, for redreſs of grievances, and for particular reforms in the Britiſh conſtitution, were heaped one upon another, and ſigned by thouſands, as any paper, however prepoſterous, on political ſubjects, in that country, always is. The King is a man who poſſeſſes more of thoſe humane feelings, which urge one man to participate with another in the calamities of human life. Whether his people were full or hungry, poor or rich, ſick or well, wounded or whole, was of no conſequence with him: the rights of his crown, the conſtitution of the kingdom, and the preſervation of his prerogatives as ſovereign, were the only objects of his attention. It became very obvious to him, and his miniſtry, that no other alternative remained, than thoſe of a foreign war with France, or a civil war at home. How far a Prince can be juſtified, on principles of morality, in making war on a foreign nation, in order to prevent civil commotions in his own country, I will not determine. I ſhould however believe it to be wrong, for one man to burn his neighbour's houſe, in order to prevent his own domeſtics from burning his.

IN order to check the dangerous ſtrides of democracy, which had began to proceed from France, a numerous army was neceſſary on the continent. The Emperor, the King of Pruſſia, and the Duke of Brunſwick, had men, but they had no money. The Engliſh court agreed to ſubſidize thoſe powers, and to ſupply money for the

ſupport

ſupport of a numerous army. The King of Spain became one of the allied Sovereigns againſt the French republic, and ſupplied with both men and money. In addition to their numerous forces, the Duke of York was ſent over, with thirteen thouſand choice troops, which knew nothing but how to conquer.

One might rather ſuppoſe that the French republicans would have ſhrunk away at the ſight of ſuch an uncommon and powerful combination. But they were ſtimulated by it to wondrous deeds of valour, and unparalleled victories. They were united in the idea of their being, under any, and every form, an independent ſovereign nation. They conſidered the people of France, as being entitled to the management of their own national concerns, and as having full and independent authority to ſettle, eſtabliſh, change, or alter their own government. They conſequently looked upon the interference of thoſe Monarchs as an unwarrantable inſult upon their national dignity and character. The conſequence was, that their armies would in no deciſive action yield the field to their enemies, and their victories became very frequent, and their advantages were conſtantly increaſing. The Duke of York, was returned to Great-Britain, under the tokens of defeat and the marks of diſgrace.

We find men of great character who openly and publicly cenſure the Republic of France, for taking offence at our treaty with Great-Britain, becauſe that one ſovereign nation can have no right to interfere in the concerns of another, and yet theſe very men juſtify Great-Britain, and the other powers, in interfering with the affairs of France. There ſurely is a great want of integrity,

or an undue prejudice in the reaſoning of theſe men. It will not do for them to ſay, that the French republic is not the French nation, becauſe that our nation, and many others, have acknowledged it as ſuch.

The Duke of Orleans, after joining the democrats, had been beheaded. His family were ſcattered, and concealed. The late King's brother, who is now by claim, Louis the eighteenth, was a fugitive in Germany. The other brother, the Duke de Artois, was then paſſing from one nation to another, ſoliciting aid, and has finally become a penſioner on the Engliſh nation, by which he is ſupported at Holarood-Houſe in Scotland. He appears miſerable and melancholly; and there may be hope, that the awakenings of his conſcience is ſuch as may fit him for a better world, ſince he can never have any honour or happineſs in this.

The children of the King, were retained as priſoners after the execution of their father and mother: and the ſon very ſoon died in his confinement. The Engliſh papers contained many aſſertions that he was poiſoned and murdered by the republicans. There can be no difficulty in ſuppoſing that the anxiety he ſuffered, the hardſhips and terrors of a priſon, and the dread of the popular reſentment, ſhortened his life; but there is no reaſon to believe that he was poiſoned, nor could there be a temptation to induce ſo vile a meaſure. If he ſhould be cut off, his uncle, who was then in Germany, would inſtantly claim the throne. The young Prince was unfortunate from his birth; the circulations in his back were imperfect, and a callous ſubſtance obtained round and near to his back bone, which prevented

vented his growing taller, he had become, in a great meaſure, deformed ; and that deformity would have increaſed with his age. He was of a ſickly, weak habit, and finiſhed his exiſtence here, by a natural death.

The Royal Princeſs was detained a priſoner, until the ſtorm which raged under the adminiſtration of Robeſpierre had ſubſided, and was then delivered over to the care of her uncle the Emperor of Germany, where ſhe now reſides.

From the account here given, no one would pant for royalty. Indeed the monarchy of France has been exceedingly unfortunate, in civil commotions and internal wars. The oppreſſions practiſed on the people by the government, and the church, have been abominable and cruel. The people have been ready, when they ſaw a proſpect of redreſs, and found a leader, to attempt a remedy ; but have been unſucceſsful. Hence there have been more civil wars in France, than in any, or perhaps all the other countries in Europe. Of twenty-ſeven Kings, the poſterity of Hugh Capet, the firſt of the Bourbonne race, and who reigned in 990, ſixteen at leaſt have died violent deaths. *

* Hainault's Hiſtory of France.

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

By an AMERICAN.

LETTER No. X.

THE ſtorm, through which the nation had paſſed, exceeds all the powers of deſcription. We may however ſtop here, and from the ſmall eminence of information, which we have gained from the preceding letters, reflect, with pity and compaſſion, upon the follies, prejudices and paſſions of the people of that country. We are obliged from our moral feelings to cenſure and condemn whatever appears violent, outrageous, and wicked in their conduct. But we are to do this, under the impulſes, that we cenſure and condemn the actions of one, who from his education or practice, is habitually in an error, or practically depraved. From the perverſions of his conceptions, from the impulſes of his appetite, or from a defect in his education, a man may be ſaid to be under a kind of criminal neceſſity to do wrong.

THERE is no doubt, but that the lower order of people, the canaille in France, are remarkable for their honeſty in matters of property. The Court had been for more than a century, the ſeat of incontinency, debauchery, and intrigue. Strong parties were conſtantly contending at Verſailles, for a pre-eminence in the royal favours; malice, revenge,

revenge, inſincerity, and deep-rooted animoſities, were component parts of the proceſs, and handed down from one generation to another, as a patrimony. One or the other had to paſs through the torturing pangs of diſappointment: and neither could ever forgive his antagoniſt. This diſpoſition was carried with more or leſs ſtrength, into every order and department of the kingdom. The great maſs of the people had groaned beneath the moſt oppreſſive tyranny, and had been but lately awakened to a full ſenſe of their injuries. There was, from a ſtrong, and novel combination of theſe, and other circumſtances, a fatal neceſſity for all the bloody and diſtreſſing evils which the nation has ſuffered. When all theſe diſtinctions, which had divided the ſeveral claſſes of men, were proſtrated, and an entire equality acknowledged, and practiſed upon, it would have been a ſingular, nay even a miraculous event, if good order and decency had been preſerved. Each one now availed himſelf of the ſituation of the country, to obtain revenge upon thoſe who had offended him, and the inſtances were multiplied by a reciprocity of aid, given by one party, or by one perſon to another.

The improvement which may be made from the calamities of that nation, ought to be ſeen in others, by an uniform attention to the rights of men, as men, from a due obſervation of the great laws of nature, which have never eſtabliſhed amongſt the human race, thoſe diſtinctions of inequality that give one man as the property of another. Thoſe diſtinctions of honour, and dignity by birth, are clearly unnatural and abſurd; therefore nature, as if affronted at the injurious inſult, provides, that moſt frequently the rank of

Princes

Princes and Nobles, originally eſtabliſhed by ſocial compacts, or gained by accidents, ſhall deſcend by inheritance to thoſe who are obviouſly incapable of poſſeſſing them with honour or uſefulneſs. The moment, therefore, in which the people obtained poſſeſſion of the idea, that thoſe artificial diſtinctions were done away, they felt themſelves exonerated from theſe obligations of duty and reſpect, to which they had before been habituated.

It may now be aſked, why the nation, when thus involved in diſtreſs and diſorder, did not return to their old government, and re-eſtabliſh royalty as an evil leſs dreadful, than a ſtate of anarchy? But this is anſwered by propoſing a few other queſtions. How ſhould a counter revolution be begun? Who would dare to propoſe it? If any one of the leaders ſhould propoſe ſuch a meaſure, he muſt be ſacrificed. If all the leaders had done it, the great body of the people would have viewed them as diſcouraged, and withdrawn their ſupport. The conſequence of which would have been, that the royal party would not liſten to any overtures, but triumphantly mount the throne of a conquered people, and bring the millions who had oppoſed them, as convicted malefactors at their feet. There never has been an inſtance in Europe, of a Sovereign's yielding a part of his prerogatives, unleſs in thoſe of King John of England, and ſome others, when the independent Nobles, ſurrounded by their vaſſals, were too mighty for them, they have yielded ſome of their regal powers in order to diminiſh that of the Nobles, to create in the people a balance between the contending parties. But there could be no hope, from any kind of confidence, in the feelings, or the policy of a reſtored

King

King and Ariſtocracy, in this inſtance. Nor, indeed, could the Monarch have any motives to mercy, or any inducement to a compromiſe.

The ſame neceſſity which had attached itſelf to all the tranſactions of the revolution, ſtill attended the men who had been engaged in it. Aſtoniſhed at a retroſpective view of the paſt, they dreaded the events and occurrences of the future; and having had no preciſe, defined limits, or well explained object before them, they now wiſhed to have the principles for which they had contended, and from the free and uniform exerciſe of which, they expected tranquility and political happineſs, reduced to an acknowledged ſyſtem, in the form of a ſocial compact. A Convention was therefore choſen to form a Conſtitution, to be laid before the people for a ratification.

In this meaſure all parties were again united. All who were in favour of maintaining the revolution, were willing to receive any conſtitution rather than to have none. Each hoped that their favourite opinions might be adopted. Thoſe who were ſecretly ſubverting the revolution, on finding that a convention would be called, appeared in favour of the meaſure, that by this craft they might gain the advantage of a ſeat, where they might ſerve the intereſt of monarchy. It was eaſily diſcerned, that thoſe principles on which a fixed and ſettled government ought to be maintained, can never anſwer the demands of a revolutionary ſituation. The exiſtence of a *chaos*, and that of an entire, and perfect *ſeparation of the elements* are infinitely different. Theſe men, therefore, muſt gain an advantage by obtaining a ſocial compact for the nation; which if practically

adhered

adhered to, would of courſe, overthrow the revolution. This game was artfully attempted in the year 1778, in the Maſſachuſetts. Men who were oppoſed to the revolution there, and much attached to the King's intereſt, urged the people to demand a Conſtitution at all events. The courts of juſtice were accordingly oppoſed in ſome of the counties, under a pretence, that the liberties of the country were in danger for want of ſuch an eſtabliſhment. But there was addreſs enough on the other ſide to procraſtinate the buſineſs, until our alliances abroad, and the events of the war, favourable to America, had rendered the practice of ſuch principles as are congenial to a ſtate of peace, eligible and convenient.

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY AN AMERICAN.

LETTER No. XI.

BEFORE we attend to the conſtitution, and its conſequences on the nation, we are to inquire into the external defence of the Republic, and the ſtate of the armies.

THE Duke of Brunſwick, a ſovereign warlike Prince, had been ſtimulated by the court of London to make one of the combination againſt the French Republic; and was commander in chief of the united forces of his own principality, and thoſe of the King of Great Britain. The Duke of York, a man without one accompliſhment for the place, was the ſecond in command. In the firſt campaign, theſe combined forces were totally defeated. The Britiſh troops in the ſame year, or the beginning of the next, were recalled to their native iſland, and the puiſſant Duke of Brunſwick was obliged on his knees, to receive from the generous conquering Republicans, ſuch a Peace as they deigned to give him.

The French army, having quieted the Duke of Brunſwick, made a viſit to Amſterdam, expelled the Stadtholder; giving to the Netherlands an opportunity to form a free government if they pleaſed, and guaranteed to them the enjoyment of a Republican Conſtitution forever.

THE King of Spain, found it to be for his intereſt, not only to enter into a treaty of peace with the Republic, but in the moſt explicit terms to acknowledge their Government, and to come into a treaty of Alliance offenſive and defenſive with it.

WHEN the new government was eſtabliſhed, the nation was at war with England, the Emperor of Germany, and the King of Pruſſia.

VERY ſoon after the adoption of the new conſtitution, the French army in ſo many battles had defeated the Pruſſian army, that the King, notwithſtanding his treaty with the King of Great-Britain, and the millions which he had received in ſubſidies from that Prince, was obliged to conclude a ſeparate Peace with the Republic.

SARDINIA, Portugal, Venice, and many other independent ſovereign powers, have been under a neceſſity to adopt the ſame meaſure; ſo that the French, the Spaniards, and the Dutch united, have no other powers to contend with, than the Emperor and the King of England; and a great proportion of the German empire has revolted, and joined the French republic.

As the Republican army conquered the Emperor of Germany's dominions in Italy, the Pope became a petitioner to the French general for a ceſſation of hoſtilities towards Rome. This requeſt was granted upon the moſt generous and liberal terms. The ſiege of Mantua was continued, and the beſieged obſtinately held out, under the fond hope, that General Wurmſer, would approach with a numerous army, and raiſe the ſiege. Buonaparte, who commanded the republican army, found his forces inadequate to the reception of Wurmſer, under the walls of Mantua, and therefore voluntarily raiſed the ſiege, leaving his

cannon

cannon on the field. His Holineſs the Pope, unfortunately conceiving, that the French power in Italy was at an end, turned round with great facility, to the Emperor, and made friendly overtures to him. Buonaparte marched with an army much worn down with the hardſhips of the ſiege of Mantua, ſo much leſſened in its numbers with ſickneſs and ſkirmiſhes, that it was by no means equal to forty thouſand effective troops. He was calculated upon in America, as the ſure prize of Wurmſer, upon whoſe age and experience, the enemies of France were raiſing the higheſt hopes. Wurmſer advanced with ſeventy thouſand men. Buonaparte, took a poſition where not more than forty thouſand could be brought into action, he baffled the ſkill and experience of the German, defeated his whole army, and made him a priſoner.

Buonaparte returned to the ſiege of Mantua, and received its ſurrender. The ardour with which the Republican troops made their attacks, rendered them irreſiſtible; but the Germans did not fight with ſpirit, becauſe that chains, whips, ſcorpions, ſlavery, and miſery, were all the trophies and bleſſings which could, by any means, attend their victories.

Buonaparte having conquered Mantua, advanced towards Rome, to chaſtiſe the perfidy of the miſtaken Pope, but before he reached the walls of that once miſtreſs of the world, he met the Pope's legate, with the moſt fervent expoſtulations that he would not ſack the city. The ſubmiſſion of His Holineſs was full, and humble; and the French army diſdained to plunder the innocent people.

In the whole conqueſt of Italy, the property of private perſons was as ſecure, as if no army was there. There never was an inſtance before, where one army marched through a fruitful, luxurious, and extenſive country, without pillaging the inhabitants. The army was chiefly compoſed of requiſition men, who had been well educated as to matters of honeſty and courteſy.

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

By an AMERICAN.

LETTER No. XII.

BY this time the nation had prepared itſelf for the eſtabliſhment of a new form of government. To be without a civil conſtitution, was to remain liable to the extravagant outrages of each popular leader, without having any eſtabliſhed known rule of meaſure for his conduct. To form a conſtitution upon thoſe principles, by which a free and equal republic is deſignated, applying equally, as well to the oppoſers of the revolution, as to its friends and ſupporters, would become dangerous. It is eſſential to a free, popular government, that freedom of ſpeaking and writing, upon public meaſures, ſhould be allowed. It was eaſily ſeen, that upon a privilege of this kind, the royal adherents, the King of England, and the Emperor of Germany, could, at a much leſs expenſe, maintain ſpeakers, writers and printers, than fleets and armies. The hope of reſtoring monarchy by force, was nearly given over; the only expectation remaining, was that of changing the opinion of the French people in favour of the meaſure. Though this was well known to the leaders in the revolution, yet a conſtitution had become of abſolute neceſſity to the union of the nation: and any one, upon other, than equal, popular principles, would have been rejected.

THE Republican conſtitution eſtabliſhed by France, including the citizens in arms, in the year 1796, recogniſes all the eſſential principles of a free and equal Republic, as the ſame are acknowledged and deſcribed in the American conſtitutions; but in many inſtances, they are expreſſed in a more elegant manner than they are in any American production.

THEY ſay, in their Declaration of Rights, that "les droits de l'homme en ſociete, ſont la liberte, l'egalite, la ſurete, la propriete." In Engliſh, "The Rights of Man in civil ſociety, are liberty, equality, ſecurity, and property." They in the next article, define liberty thus, "La liberte conſiſte a pouviour faire ce qui ne nuit pas aux autres." That liberty conſiſts in poſſeſſing the power of doing that which does no injury to another.

IN the next article, equality is deſcribed in a more eligible manner than it has been done in any conſtitution in united America. "L'egalite conſiſte en ce que loi eſt la meme pour tous, ſoit qu'elle protege, ſoit qu'elle puniſſe."

"LE Egalite n'admet aucune diſtinction de naiſſance." That is, That equality conſiſts in having laws equally applicable to all the people, whether to protect or to puniſh them. The ſame ſentiments are found in every American conſtitution. That equality can admit of no diſtinction by birth, is alſo an American ſentiment. In the Conſtitution of Maſſachuſetts, it is thus expreſſed, That all men are born free, equal, and independent; and that the idea of a man's being born a ruler, a judge, a law-giver, is unnatural, abſurd and ridiculous.

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THERE are a great number of elegant, true, and valuable ſentiments collected in that important inſtrument. Indeed there are no rights, which can be enjoyed by a free and virtuous people, but what are recognized, nor are there any civil duties neceſſary to the maintenance of a free and equal government, but what are enjoined. There are no privileges which citizens in a ſtate of government can enjoy, but what are preſerved by it.

THE Legiſlative and Executive departments, are fairly deſcribed, and the judicial power is properly provided for and encouraged. The arts and ſciences, are courted with liberality, and agriculture and commerce acknowledged, as moſt neceſſary and important.

THE objection amongſt the American politicians, is, that the nation is too numerous, and the habits of the people too groſs to practiſe on a ſyſtem ſo pure, compleat and refined. But ſince the plan does honor to humanity, ſince it will promote the true intereſt of mankind, if it ſhould be ſupported, and ſince a free independent nation, has determined to attempt it, why ſhould the people of united America, or any of them, urge their opinions againſt the trial? There is no way to determine, whether a civilized nation is capable of enjoying a free government, but from the reſult of an attempt.

THE Council of Five Hundred, is ſaid to be too numerous to do national buſineſs with propriety. They repreſent twenty-ſix millions of people. The Houſe of Repreſentatives in Congreſs repreſent five millions, and conſiſts of about one hundred members. The proportion here is the ſame as it is in France. The people of Maſſachuſetts are about three hundred thouſand, and

have

have a right to chooſe for the ſtate legiſlature more than three hundred repreſentatives. We experience none of the diſtreſſing evils, which ſome Americans calculate upon for the French Republic. The Britiſh Houſe of Commons has, including Scotch Repreſentatives, five hundred and fifty-eight members. The men who ſpeak againſt the French repreſentation have no apprehenſions on account of their beloved Britiſh government, where five millions of people only, have five hundred repreſentatives, and where the Council of Ancients, or Houſe of Lords, is ſtill more out of proportion.

The Directory of France conſiſts of five members. Our's under the old confederation, and in the time of the revolutionary war, conſiſted of about ſixty, with powers to legiſlate, and execute. We were not deſtroyed or run away with, but maintained with unparalleled dignity, a glorious conflict.

The French people are afraid, as they are ſurrounded with powerful enemies, to truſt all the power of the Executive department in the hands of any one man. Their caution is founded in wiſdom and experience; and they can, when their ſovereignty as a Republic, ſhall be acknowledged by the Emperor of Germany, and the King of Great-Britain, and when peace ſhall be eſtabliſhed, alter their departments as may be found to be neceſſary. The great point now before them is, to ſettle and eſtabliſh the important fact, that the French people can maintain a civil government by their own voluntary conſent, without the idea of hereditary power, the glare of monarchy, or the awe of a ſtanding mercenary army, to aid the civil authority,

rity. When this ſhall be done, the government can be changed and modelled on republican principles, as may become neceſſary and uſeful.

By the Conſtitution it is provided, that "Nul ne peut ètre empèche de dire, ècrire, imprimier et publiere ſapenſee." No one is to be impeached for expreſſing, writing or printing his thoughts.

This proviſion is abſolutely neceſſary to a free country, but very hazardous in a revolutionary ſtate. The ſame idea is recognized in all the American conſtitutions; but they were not formed whilſt the independence of the country was at hazard. The printers in favour of the claims of Great-Britain, had, in the time of the revolutionary war, no ſtanding in united America, excepting within the lines of the Britiſh army. Our committes of correſpondence, our county, and colonial conventions, were the authors of the domociliary viſits, and took care of the unfriendly printers and writers, until our governments were formed: and then, laws duly made, prohibited, under the moſt ſevere penalties, the writing, printing, or ſpeaking, any thing againſt the independence of the United States, or in favour of the claims of the Britiſh King upon the American colonies.

Had this been omitted, our country would have teemed with preſſes devoted to the Britiſh crown, and with artful mercenary writers, even native Americans, to diſtract our counſels, and to divide and diſunite our people.

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY AN AMERICAN.

LETTER No. XIII.

A COMBINED party in America, are conſtantly aſſerting, that the French people are quite incapable of maintaining a free government upon elective principles. Whether theſe aſſertions proceed from a friendly fear, that they will fail in the important attempt, or from an inimical diſpoſition to popular governments in general, is worthy of attention and conſideration.

THESE men are obliged to acknowledge, that the influence of the principles of hereditary powers, have rendered the world ſo wretched, for ſeveral thouſands of years, that it is moſt devoutly to be wiſhed, that a free ſyſtem of civil government could be univerſally adopted.

THE world has acknowledged, from the firſt page of its hiſtory, that virtue and happineſs are ſo cloſely allied, that they never can be ſeparated; and yet vice has its full career, and under the appellation of artificial, or political virtue, is cheriſhed and ſupported. Machevilian policy, is, to render *vice*, as *vice*, ſubſervient to the purpoſes of virtue. Mandaville, in his fable of the bees, has refined more extenſively on this idea, than any other writer; and as he furniſhes an apology for the meaneſt, moſt profligate, and moſt ſcandalous

dalous vices, he has done more injury to the morals of mankind, than any other philoſopher has done. The pedant, a diſciple of Mandaville, appears as a fop of a ſcholar, whilſt he is exhibiting arguments, to prove that thoſe vices, which ravage his health, deſtroy his own conſtitution, and contaminate his mind, are on the whole, for the public good. But ſtill as genuine gold is preferable to all counterfeits, ſo natural genuine virtue exceeds all the artificial ſubſtitutes, which a corrupted and abandoned ſet of politicians can produce.

The nature and effects of an hereditary, and of a free popular government being examined, we may decide, whether the attempt to exclude the former, and to eſtabliſh the latter, in France, is laudable.

Were we to rely on the holy writings, as an authority in point, perhaps we need proceed no further, for proofs of the deteſtible nature of a monarchy; but as you may ſhew theſe letters to ſome of thoſe polite men, who paſs under the appellation of free thinkers, and who may become prejudiced againſt the whole, for ſuch homely quotations, we will omit drawing any arguments from the Bible.

The public opinion of a nation is the law of the ſubjects; the opinion of the world is the law of nations, and where the forms of government are the ſame, or in any manner ſimilar to each other, there the condition of the people will be the ſame, or be proportionally aſſimilated to each other. Therefore each nation has an intereſt in the eſtabliſhments of the governments of other nations, as one man has an intereſt in the example and morals of another, who is placed near him: but

but yet this intereſt affords no right to one nation to interfere in the form or principles of government in another, for all are independent of, and remote from the power of the other.

Kings are but men; their elevated ſtations might be the means of extending their benevolent wiſhes and noble exertions for the happineſs of their ſubjects; but this has ſeldom if ever been the caſe. Their elevation has been generally, if not univerſally, extended, and their pride, arrogance and ambition, has given them a haughty diſpoſition to war, for the purpoſe of gaining revenge over a rival ſovereign, or to gratify their ambition in bringing others whom they envy, down to the level with themſelves, or by conquering, through the bloody calamities of war, innocent and unoffending countries, to their ſubjection, in order to raiſe themſelves to an equality with other Monarchs.

The pride of rank is indiſpenſable in a ſtate of royalty. A ſovereign Prince is obliged, to raiſe his equipage, his court parade, and all the inſignia of his ſovereignty, in proportion as they are raiſed by others. And a nation may be, and nations frequently have been perſuaded, that their national felicity depends ſo eſſentially on the appearance, the etiquette, and expenſive parade of their chief magiſtrate, that mountains of wealth have been raiſed, and ſacrificed to that whimſical idea, whilſt the individuals, from whoſe toil and labour it has been collected, have conſtantly groaned under the moſt oppreſſive ſtate of poverty. So the hungry Indians paint their chief, and ornament him with feathers.

Perhaps, amongſt the Monarchs of Europe, there is not one, in our day, whoſe character is ſo

good

good as that of the Britiſh King. Yet all who know his perſonal character, agree that he is obſtinate, avaricious and ambitious. He, as a man, has no kind of feeling for the ſufferings of his people. Attends to government as to a piece of machinery, which is to be moved to a certain point, and though millions are cruſhed by the movement, yet it can never be checked, or cauſed to deviate. The ſupport of the monarchy, with an increaſing influence, of a nobility, with a glare of wealth, with debauched and profligate manners, and contemptible underſtandings; a parliament rendered obſequious by the hope of places and penſions, and all maintaining an abſolute monarchy under the affectation of a balanced and mixed government, are the concentrated objects of his purſuit.

When he feels himſelf offended, or any occurrence takes place, by means whereof his favourite ſyſtem is endangered, he can independent of his people and parliament, declare war, or commence hoſtilities; the nation being thus involved, muſt of courſe ſupport the war, whether neceſſary or unneceſſary, provoked or unprovoked, juſt or unjuſt; the ſuppoſed conſtitution makes the ſovereign the ſole judge, and it is criminal to oppoſe, even in opinion, the meaſure.

The preſent war with France, was originated by the King in this way; and the tranſportation to Botany-Bay of Muir and Palmer, ſhewed what every one who oppoſed him had to ſuffer.

The beſt method of determining the propriety of political meaſures, and the advantages of civil ſyſtems, is to examine their effects upon, and their conſequences to the people. Should we examine the ſituation of the Britiſh monarchy, we ſhall find

find the nation involved in ſuch a public debt, that all the taxes with which they are oppreſſed, cannot pay one half its annual intereſt. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has long ſince declared, that the tax on dogs and hair-powder, were his laſt reſources. That the means of revenue were compleatly exhauſted; and yet the Monarch will not have peace. It is true that he has, to ſtill the clamours of a ſinking nation, ſent a commiſſioner to Liſle. When it was publickly known, that France had by ſolemn treaty, ſtipulated with the Netherlands, and with Spain, to make peace on no other terms than that of having reſtored to them all the countries, or cities taken from them in the war; yet Lord Malmſbury, the King's commiſſioner, was ſent without any authority on that point. No peace, therefore, could be made. The war continues; and God alone knows when, or where it will end.

When we take a view of the people of England, we may begin with the poor, miſerable, hungry, and naked millions, who know none of the comforts, much leſs of the conveniences of life, we riſe to a ſet of honeſt, induſtrious mechanics, who on hard fare, cloſe living, inceſſant labour, and many ſelf-denials, with other acts of frugality, gain a bare ſupport. The merchants next attract our attention. A very few amongſt ſeveral hundred thouſands of them, are opulent. The monopolies of companies, formed by the crown, for the purpoſe of raiſing a revenue, and the exceſſive duties, on all the movements of trade, mar all the hopes of induſtry, and render commerce, which is the natural reſource of the iſland, uncertain, and poor. The order of nobility deſerves particular attention. The nobles

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are men, who derive large landed eſtates from their anceſtors, the conquerors of the country in the Gothic war. In order to maintain this rank, it has become neceſſary, to allow the eſtates to deſcend to the oldeſt male heir, leaving all the other children dependent upon the public for ſupport, or to be thrown into the depths of poverty. The policy of the nation has lately kept up fleets and armies, wherein theſe noble paupers are maintained as officers. They are rarely on the parade, and not ſo frequent in the field, the deſign of their appointments being, not that they ſhould fight, but that they ſhould be maintained. The nobility are generally people of looſe morals, and frequently are guilty of cruelty, debauchery, and of ſetting pernicious examples before others. The wealth they expend in the races, at the gaming table, in the expenſive and barbarous amuſement of hunting, at the theatres,&c.&c. is drawn from the labours of the hungry, miſerable, and ſuffering muititude.

THIS ſyſtem has a greater effect in Scotland, where the wretched poor people, croud the ſtreets of the capital as profeſſed beggars; or where in the country, the toiling peaſant knows not the bleſſings of bread, meat or beer; but ſuſtains a reluctant life, with the dirty morſels, which the ſwine in America would paſs by without attention, and quenches his thirſt in the highway brook.

BUT ſhall we paſs to Ireland, that land of plenty and profuſion? The ſoil teems with all the luxuries of life; but millions toil in hunger from day to day. The tables of the nobles are loaded with every thing that can gratify the appetite; but the men who place it there, turn away from it, under the keeneſt hunger, and the moſt poignant

nant diſtreſs. The ſtalls of the great, expend millions on horſes kept for pleaſure, whilſt the labourer could feaſt on the grain which falls from their mouths. The numerous kennels of hounds, are fed on the beſt of meats, whilſt the animals of the human race, who feed them, would gladly feaſt on the bones which they have gnawed. It is in vain to attempt a deſcription of the miſery and the wretchedneſs of the people of Ireland, or Scotland. No man beſides Dr. Johnſon has ever ſeen them without pity and compaſſion, and all agree that their wretchedneſs is beyond the force of language.

The effects of this political machinery having been thus exhibited, their cauſes may be reaſonably inquired after; and the admirers of the ſyſtem, may demand, why the people are thus wretched under a form of government which has attracted the admiration and received the praiſes of the learned men of all Europe?

There has never been but one epoch, ſince that conſtitution, the ſubject of Britiſh pride was underſtood, even by its warmeſt advocates, in which philoſophers and men of genius had an opportunity to diſcuſs the principles of it with freedom. Before the decapitation of Charles the firſt, England, with the other parts of Europe, was involved in ignorance and barbariſm. Before that æra, there was a contention in the dark, concerning the feudal prerogatives of the crown, the power of the nobles, and the inherent rights and ancient liberties of the people; but there was then no known and acknowledged ſtandard to appeal to.

In the time of the Republican government, or of what was called the Uſurpation of Cromwell,

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all the writers, amongſt whom were ſome men of excellent learning, ſuch as Hampden, Sidney, Nedham, and others, wrote in favour of a free government. But as ſoon as the reſtoration of monarchy took place, the pens of all eminent writers on that ſide of the queſtion, were ſilenced, and Clarendon led the way of flattery to hereditary authority.

The writers in other nations, who have applauded the Britiſh government, have been men who have quarreled with their own national governments. In the abſolute monarchies of the other parts of Europe, the oppreſſed ſubjects would gladly change the tyrannies under which they ſuffer, for a government in which there is more perſonal ſecurity and ſome degree of freedom. But it does by no means follow from thence, that thoſe men conſider the Britiſh conſtitution as the beſt which could poſſibly be made.

We have to inquire, what, and where this much boaſted conſtitution is? Who has ſeen or read it? There is an inſtrument called the *charta de foreſta*, which protects the game, and hunting places of the nobility. This was rather a compact between the King and the Nobles, or a treaty of peace on their wars, than a charter of privileges from the Sovereign. There is another inſtrument called *magna charta*, which is much boaſted of by Engliſhmen: but this contains nothing more than ſome conceſſions againſt the oppreſſion of the *freemen* within the realm. There are principles contended for, which have never authoritatively been on paper: But on theſe, the crown, the nobles, and the people, have never agreed.

The King, Lords and Commons in Parliament, are the Conſtitution of Great-Britain.

From ſuch a conſtitution, what happineſs have the people to expect? There are five millions of people in the realm; for theſe, as their Repreſentatives, the Houſe of Commons, are elected: But there are not more than ſix hundred thouſand who have the privilege of voting, ſo that the legiſlature for the whole is elected by one tenth part of the people.

The Houſe of Lords take their ſeats by inheritance, and are independent of the nation.

The King claims the crown by the right of inheritance, and independent of all his ſubjects.

It is true, that the King and Houſe of Lords, can enact no law without the concurrence of the Commons; but it is as true, that when a law is enacted, the commons cannot repeal it, however oppreſſive and injurious it may be, without the concurrence of both the other branches. That nation is now involved in a public debt; ſo that in order to diſcharge the annual intereſt, every article of the luxuries, comforts, conveniencies, and neceſſaries of life, are taxed as high as they can bear, and none of thoſe taxes can be taken off, or leſſened, without the conſent of the King and the Houſe of Lords, over whom the people can have no controul or influence.

The oppreſſion of the nation was carried to ſuch an extreme, by Charles the firſt, that the people found it neceſſary to deſtroy his life, in an extra-judicial manner, in order to gain a remedy. His two ſons, who alternately ſucceeded him, were not cautioned by the fate of their father, but continued their tyrannical claims until the whole race were expelled from the throne, and the dinaſty changed to another family. Where then, are the boaſted advantages of this much admired

ſyſtem?

ſyſtem? In neither of thoſe revolutions, did the conſtitution have any kind of operation. The will of the people pulled down one, and ſet up another. It is true, that the Parliament, after the acceſſion of William and Mary, paſſed an act for directing the deſcent of the kingly power; but it is as true, that if the Pretender in the attempt of 1715, or that of his ſon in 1745, had ſucceeded to regain the throne of their anceſtors, that act of parliament, would have been conſidered as a nullity, and been treated as ſuch by the nation. And yet this, and one other ſimilar precedent, is all, which can be found, to give the Parliament a right to direct the ſucceſſion of the Crown, and theſe were evidently done by the will of the people, in their natural and collective capacity, and not by any form or force of the political conſtitutions of the Nation.

THERE are a great many ſagacious men in England, who are convinced, that the preſent Monarch there, is the laſt King of the Houſe of Hanover, who will ever be on the Britiſh throne. The family is run out, and the dinaſty may be changed, but the evil will continue until the Lords, the ariſtocracy ſhall be aboliſhed.

WHEN William and Mary were introduced to the Britiſh throne, a debt was accumulated by the expenſe of the armies which were raiſed to defend it againſt the claims of James, the exiled ſovereign. The deciſive battle was fought on the banks of the Boyne, in Ireland in 1688. That debt was funded, on the miſchievous idea, that a national debt is a public bleſſing. It was then apparently ſmall, but the revenue extorted from the ſuffering people, has been ſo far from redeeming the debt, that it has encreaſed more than

a thouſand fold. There is no pretence now, of ever diſcharging it.

By this ſuppoſed conſtitution, the King, independent of the Lords and Commons, has a right to wage war. When this is done, the government muſt maintain it, or the country muſt be ſubdued. He has the ſole right to determine the number of his armies, and the quantity of his ſhipping. Theſe have been ſo extravagantly and prodigally encreaſed, that the nation cannot defray the expenſes. It may happen that the parliament will not vote the ſovereign any ſupplies, but he then can place a negative on all their proceedings, and ruin the nation. The parliament has now no means for further ſupplies, and thoſe ariſing from acts already paſſed, are without their reach and controul; ſo that the King as to theſe, is independent of them; and as to the revenue, completely abſolute.

But it is in vain to talk of the checks and balances of that government; the miniſter will forever have his majority in both houſes. The allurements of honours, promotions, places, and penſions, will forever give it to him.

The army and navy are not the moſt unreaſonable expenſe of the nation.

The King has his millions ſterling annually, for his houſhold,&c. The Prince of Wales three hundred thouſand pounds a year for his table, &c. The other Princes and Princeſſes, are ſupported with immenſe ſums, at the expenſe of the people. The Prince of Wales' debts, to the amount of hundreds of thouſands ſterl. are frequently paid from the public treaſury. The ſtipends, half pay, and gratuities of favourites, take up infinite ſums of money. Thirty-ſix thouſand pounds was the

annual

annual ſtipend of the late Chief Juſtice, and the other Judges were paid in proportion. Extravagant and unneceſſary ſalaries were raiſed for favorite Governors, &c. Lord Dorcheſter had fifteen thouſand pounds ſterling, as Governor of the Canadas ; when the Preſident of the American Nation had only ſix thouſand. Their ſyſtem of government is ſuch, that the men who earn, and thoſe who receive and waſte the money, do not calculate upon it, as drained from the labour of the people, but in fact, contemplate the King, as a living, inexhauſtible fountain of riches ; and conſider the money as flowing ſpontaneouſly from him, without attaching to it an idea of its being produced by the labour of the ſubjects.

THEY who covet a mixed monarchy would do well to go to England for it, and enjoy it there.

SHOULD we travel into the principalities of the German empire, we have to wade through the diſtreſs and ſufferings of the miſerable multitudes, that till the fertile ſoil for the haughty lordlings, who found their claim on their rights of birth, and treat the others as ſlaves.

THANK Heaven, that a ſmall ray of light, from united America, has beamed on one of thoſe wretched ſovereignties. The principality of Bavaria, is two hundred miles ſquare. A fertile, healthy and delightful territory, but their mode of government, the examples of the higher orders, the corruption of the Eccleſiaſtics, with their own ignorance, and want of enterprize, have reduced the inhabitants to a ſtate of proverbial wretchedneſs. Begging is an occupation taught with great care, and improved with great art and induſtry, and is very far from being diſreputable.

It has ſo happened in the courſe of events, that Benjamin Thompſon, a native of the United States of America, called from a title acquired in England, Sir Benjamin Thompſon, arrived in Bavaria, under the reign of a Duke, whoſe heart was ſoftened, and whoſe mind was tinctured with benevolence. The influence of Thompſon, has changed the face of the principality, and his exertions have introduced the dawnings of economy, induſtry, and information. He is of courſe, the envy of the ariſtocracy there, and ſhould he continue to be popular throughout the reign of the preſent Duke, we may well count upon his overthrow under the next.

Prussia, a kingdom, lately grown out of the principality of Brandenburg, is an abſolute monarchy. There are four orders of Knighthood, created by the Prince, ſince he aſſumed the appellation of the King of Pruſſia. The Legiſlative power he holds in his own hands, and the law is made and publiſhed when he pleaſes, as often after as before the offence is committed. The civil Juridicatory is in the hands of 4 Chancellors, who act by their deputies: Theſe rob the people and render them poor and miſerable, whilſt, with their earnings, one hundred and eighty thouſand mercenary troops are paid, to compel their ſubmiſſion, and to vindicate the honors of the ſovereign.

The Poles, when they were a nation, had no freedom. The Government was altogether in the hands of the Clergy, and Nobility, who uſed, on horſeback, in the plain of Warſaw, to elect the King. He was the head of the oppreſſion under which the people ſuffered. The men of Poland made a faint ſtruggle to eſtabliſh their rights as men, but to prevent a meaſure, ſo very deſtructive to theſe

hereditary

hereditary uſurpers, the Nobles with the Prieſts, their corrupted ſupporters, conſpired together, to ſurrender the whole nation to the combined tyrannies of Ruſſia and Pruſſia. Theſe have divided the Poles as vaſſals, and the Nobles and Clergy, under their auſpices, now ſecurely riot, on the toils, tears and groans of their ſubjugated countrymen.

If the compaſs of this letter would allow of it, I could ſhew beyond a doubt, that the unhappy cataſtrophe of Poland, was produced by the *Roman Catholic Religion.*

In the year 1733, the clergy of that denomination, obtained a law of the diet, to exclude from all offices and civil privileges, the *Diſſidents.* The diet intended by that deſcription, to comprehend only a ſmall uneaſy ſect, known at that time, by that appellation; but the term was very ſoon conſtructively extended to all who were not of the Roman catholic faith.

The greater part of the nobility were Roman catholics, becauſe that religion was naturally ſubſervient to their tyranny over the people. There was a conteſt which laſted more than thirty years, and at length, in the year 1768, the body of the people prevailed ſo far, as to have the law repealed. The catholicks then armed in open rebellion againſt the government,* and being ſurrounded by nations and monarchs, devoted to the Pope, and the clergy, they became ſuperior to their opponents. This produced the conſtitution of 1771, wherein that religion was eſtabliſhed, and others, ſeemingly tolerated. This did not ſatisfy the ambition of the clergy and nobility, and therefore the whole was overthrown, and the nation given up to the two adjacent tyrannies, in the year 1794.

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* Hiſtory of Poland publiſhed in London, 1795.

THE Roman catholic religion is favourable in its nature, nay it is neceſſary to an European deſpotiſm; and therefore the Britiſh monarchy, in the year 1780, procured an act of parliament, which, under the ſpecious pretence of eſtabliſhing the rights of conſcience, encouraged that religion.

RELIGION can never be ſafely improved as a part of civil government. A good man is a good ſubject; and if religion makes the individuals good, of which the community is compoſed, the whole community will be good of conſequence. The connection of Moſes and Aaron, was no doubt, very ſuitable under a theocracy. When the people were guided by a cloud in the day, and a pillar of fire in the night, and were fed with manna, and other miraculous productions; this might do, but all Europe is filled with melancholy and diſtreſſing evidence, of the evils reſulting from a connection between the church and ſtate. Since miracles have in fact ceaſed, and the people are left to the reaſoning faculties of their own mind, an extraordinary divine interpoſition is not to be expected; and religious inſtitutions, though ſacredly protected, are no part of the civil government.

SPAIN, conquered from the Moors, the moſt rich and productive ſpot in Europe, is in a ſtate of ſervile wretchedneſs. The poverty of the common people is beyond deſcription; and the tyranny ſupported by the Sovereign, aided by the addreſs and abominable influence of the Catholic clergy, has no parallel on the face of the globe. The earth is oppreſſed with fruit; nature's lap is filled with luxuries; each ſeaſon comes with baſkets full of the neceſſaries and conveniences of life;

life; but there is but a ſmall part of the people indeed, who can be allowed to ſatiate their hunger.

PORTUGAL had a mixed monarchy, what in England would be called a free conſtitution. There is indeed at the preſent moment, a ſhadow of it remaining, under the appellation of the Cortes, or a meeting of the ſtates, by the clergy, nobility and commons. This aſſembly holds the power of making preferments, and of beſtowing honors. But it is there as it is in England; the commons, or the popular part of the aſſembly, is intirely loſt, under the influence of the other branches, and the government is the moſt tyrannical that hiſtory knows of. The clergy ſupport their own authority, and that of the nobles, by the force and fraud of the Romiſh religion. A man can have no preferment there, without he will abſolutely ſwear to ſubmit to the powers that be, becauſe they are ordained of God. He muſt, amongſt other tenets, fully as abſurd, ſwear that he believes, that the prayers purchaſed from the prieſts, will mitigate the pains of the damned in hell, that at the adminiſtration of the chriſtian ſacrament of the ſupper, the bread and wine, are changed into the real body and blood of the Saviour of the world, and that he is perſonally preſent there with the ſame body which he aſſumed when he was on earth.

WHEN we croſs the Alps, and go into the garden of Europe, our expectations run before us, heightened by the anticipation of every thing which is pleaſant and lovely. But when we embrace Italy, once the ſeat of liberty, and formerly the land of heroes, we find nothing but venality, intrigue, inſincerity and debauchery. There is no ſcience in Italy, the cunning of the prieſthood,

guards watchfully againſt the introduction of it. The light of ſcience would detect their fraud, and expoſe their corruption and wickedneſs. The arts, more eſpecially ſuch as have a tendency to promote debauchery and laciviouſneſs, are encouraged and ſucceed.

THE country being divided into many ſtates, is governed by an hereditary nobility. The conduct and examples of this ariſtocracy, have brought the people to ſuch a ſtate of vice and folly, that virtue is diſgraceful, and vice, the principal ornament in a faſhionable character. The man who is civil or attentive to his own wife, is hiſſed from all the polite circles. The woman, as ſoon as ſhe is married, is placed in the hands of a gallant, who has more power over her, and more intimacy with her than her huſband has. The parents hire females for their ſons, and the common people ſell their daughters at auction for that purpoſe. No man can have any degree of reaſon to believe, that the ſon he feeds and educates, or the daughter which he gives in marriage, is his own.

THIS corrupted, and horrible ſtate of diſgraceful civil polity, is maintained and ſupported, by the *Pope*, that holy father of the Church, and his Cardinals, Biſhops, and thouſands of Prieſts.

THOSE, derive their power from the terrors of the Religion which they have fabricated, and gather immenſe riches to the church, from the fears of the people.

I WILL not weary your inquiries, by leading you into Turkey, Aſia and India. In all theſe regions, the multitudes which fill them, are in an indiſcribable ſtate of poverty and miſery, entirely owing to the abſolute, deſpotic and hereditary governments which they are under.

ALL

All theſe tyrannies are ſupported by ſyſtems of religion, operating on the hopes and fears of credulous and defrauded millions.

Upon the miſery of theſe wretched multitudes, the tear flows readily, from the eye of philanthropy. But where is the remedy? The power of the Prieſts, muſt be firſt ſubverted, before any effectual ſteps can be taken for relief. The human mind, in all Europe, has been, by the eſtabliſhed churches, compoſing conſtituent parts of the civil government, wrapt in chains of darkneſs, and fettered by the ſhackles of ignorance. When the people awake to a ſenſe of the wrongs they have ſuffered, they will awake as *ſlaves* who have ſlept for ages, and who have opened their eyes as *maniacs*.

The man, who ſuppoſes that a nation can emerge from a long ſtate of ſlavery, with all the order, regularity and ſtability which may be expected in a well regulated government, is a *maniac* himſelf. When ever a revolution is attempted, it muſt of neceſſity produce convulſions, ravages and bloody carnage. But is this a reaſonable objection to making the attempt? When the remedy of an amputation is propoſed, to ſave the patient's life, are the pangs he has to ſuffer, a good objection to the meaſure? When life has been ſuppreſſed by lying under water, it may be ſaid, that the convulſions the man has to endure, in his reſuſcitation, are more painful, than what he had felt in drowning; but this is not thought to be a ſufficient reaſon for refraining from proper operations.

The men, who make an objection to a revolution, becauſe the people are not fitted for it, are called upon to ſhew, when they will be better prepared for a ſtate of liberty, than they now are?

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The countries which are now involved in ſlavery, are old fully-ſettled countries. There can be no change from increaſe, or growth, which can by any means give aid to their progreſs towards a ſtate of freedom. The monarchs, the nobles, and the clergy, in whoſe hands all the powers of government, and means of education are, have an intereſt, directly oppoſed to every ray of light, every ſpecies of civil freedom, and every degree of political information. Ignorance, darkneſs and blindneſs, muſt of courſe increaſe, until one great, and univerſal convulſion, ſhall rend and overturn the whole, and offer a new creation to the political univerſe.

The ſame objections, which are now made againſt the French revolution, from an idea of an incapacity to enjoy a ſtate of Liberty, will have a much greater force in future centuries; for as this incapacity, has been produced, by the wickedneſs of the eccleſiaſtics, and the deſpotiſm of the Prince, and his miniſtry, ſo, under the ſame wickedneſs and deſpotiſm, it muſt be increaſed until the ancient ſhackles ſhall be broken, and the chains of ſlavery, ſhall be looſened by a force, proportioned to the length of time, in which they ſhall have been endured.

The ſame objections which are now, by ſome Americans, thrown in the way of the French revolution, were once attempted againſt that of America. There was no poſſibility to anſwer theſe by calculation, or ſatisfactory reaſonings. The object in view afforded a degree of enthuſiaſm, which did not wait the ſlow progreſs of reaſon; but held the dull proceſs of calculation in contempt.

Ye Americans, when ye condemn the enthuſiaſm of Frenchmen, turn your eyes to the ſacred vaults of Bunker-Hill, to the uncovered and expoſed ſkeletons on the White-Plains, to the bones expoſed on the banks of the Brandywine, to ſkulls unburied before the walls of Quebec, and to the graves of the more ſucceſsful Saratoga, and York-Town; and then inquire, whether in the ardent chaſe for liberty, ye counted upon the viciſſitudes which are forever commemorated by theſe awful monuments of defeat and victory.

The opponents of the French republic ſay, that there is not public virtue in that country, ſufficient to maintain a free government. But what is public virtue? It may be anſwered, that it is the love of our country. We aſk again, what is the love of our country? Is it an affection for the ſoil, climate, or people? I anſwer, that the love of our country, has no affection of the mind attached to it. Pope ſays, that "ſelf-love and ſocial, are the ſame." There may be public virtue, where there is no real piety. But the latter would be a good guarantee, though no baſis for the former. Public virtue is a predominant deſire, and a uniform deſign to render our country ſecure and happy. The foundation of this, is a regard to our own perſons, intereſts and connections. We wiſh to ſupport that ſyſtem, which renders us ſecure, and conſequently happy; which provides a protection to us, and ours, gives a remedy for every wrong, elevating the cares and anxieties of civilized life, by a contemplation that we are under a government of laws and not of men, and that whatſoever meaſure we meet ſhall be meaſured to us again. That our lives in civil ſociety, is but a reciprocity of benefits, and that all are equally under the protection of the laws.

Who can prove that the neceſſities reſulting from danger, the ſchool of affliction and diſtreſs, the free liberty of enquiry into the rights of mankind, may not ultimately enable the French nation to poſſeſs a free, equal, elective government to advantage? The Frenchmen are now in the high-way of information. All their conſtitutions, and other productions, have the ſame ſpirit as is found in thoſe of America.

France, ſhould ſhe re-eſtabliſh her monarchy, would be infinitely worſe off than ſhe ever has been; and ſhe has, more eſpecially by a religious tyranny, been in a much more deplorable ſituation, than many other monarchies have been. The people have in fact ſuffered poverty, miſery, and degradation until they had forgotten that they were of the ſame ſpecies of animals with their oppreſſors.

The return of the French monarchy would be ruin and diſtreſs to the people. The men who have taken a part in the revolution, or in the rebellion, as it would then be denominated, muſt be cut off, or baniſhed; their eſtates confiſcated, and their families made beggars. All who have aided in the conflict, by their property, muſt receive the halter as a compenſation. The confiſcated eſtates muſt be reſtored. The nobility and prieſts, who have adhered to royalty, are to be rewarded at the expenſe of the people. To prevent future inſurrections, the ancient legiſlative power of the nobles muſt be annihilated, and the King be as abſolutely ſovereign, as the force of fleets and armies, commanded by his minions, aided by the alliances of other tyrants, can render him.

When

When we caſt our eyes into Germany, we behold the peaſant, under the feet of his petty landlord, that landlord under the feet of the cruel magiſtrate, that magiſtrate oppreſſed by the weight of the officer of the police, that officer overawed to acts of cruelty by the haughty nobleman of the diſtrict, that nobleman cruſhed by the feet of a favourite miniſter, and that miniſter again obſequiouſly bending to the favorite chamber-maid of an haughty, inexorable, and fooliſh Empreſs, who has the compleat controul of a ſilly, ill-taught Sovereign.

The principalities in Germany have the ſame grades of miſery and poverty.

In Ruſſia the millions who compoſe the empire, are content with a little black bread, like what would be produced by our rye brand. They carry this in a leather packet, for their dinner, and have the draught of the brook for their repaſt. The nobility deſpiſe the oppreſſed merchant, who pays thirty per cent for all he buys and ſells, as a revenue to the crown. Theſe again, are treated with contempt by the ſovereign, and beggared by their rank. All centres in the ſtile of the court, and all is expended to gratify an Empreſs or Emperor.

The uſual claſſes, in Ruſſia, are the nobles and vaſſals, but where marks of genius for commerce are found in a ſlave, he is allowed to purchaſe his freedom; and when he has gained property he cautiouſly hides it in the earth, and appears ragged and poor. Should the ruling power diſcover his wealth, it would be ſeized for public uſes, or he would be compelled to accept the title of Nobility, that he might be obliged to ſpend his money for the ſupport of the court parade and etiquette.

When

When the late Empreſs uſed to travel from Saint Peterſburg to Moſcow, ſhe was drawn about ſix hundred miles in a houſe, where ſhe lived, eat and ſlept. The country was nothing but huts on the way, and is remarkably barren, but ſhe ordered the flocks and herds to be collected from the diſtance of ſeveral hundred miles, and painted ſcenery to be prepared, repreſenting villages as ſhe paſſed. The bleating of the hungry flocks, and the lowings of the ſuffering herds, were unpleaſant; but the numerous nobility attending at their own expenſe, congratulated her Majeſty at each reſt, upon the fertility and riches of her empire. *This is a Monarchy carried to perfection.*

Aware of the miſchiefs which would inevitably reſult from the moſt diſtant claims of hereditary dignities, or powers, the Congreſs of the United States, in the year 1795, enacted a law for a uniform naturalization of foreigners, and in the oath provided to be taken by the alien, who is made a citizen, he is obliged to ſwear, that he abſolutely diſclaims all right or title to a *Nobility*, under any prince, or in any country, nation, or kingdom whatever. Thus the prudent Legiſlature of the United States have carefully guarded our nation againſt the influence of that denomination of dignitaries, which hath ſpread diſgrace and hunger over the whole European world.

The moſt oppreſſive evil which torments the European world is the Nobility. There can be no freedom there, under the preſent ſyſtems. Wherever one man is born a ruler, another muſt be born to be ruled by him; or elſe the right derived from birth is nugatory. Wherever a man is born under the hereditary dominions of another, he is an hereditary ſlave. The diſtinction be-

tween

tween a man's being born a ſubject to the laws, which affect all the nation alike, and being born a ſubject to a man, or a body of men, holding authority by inheritance as a right, and not by law, or legal appointment, is no leſs important than obvious.

A REVIEW OF THE CAUSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

By an AMERICAN.

LETTER No. XIV.

SHOULD we turn our eyes away from this diſguſting object, and contemplate the beauties and bleſſings of a free, equal, elective, Republican government, we ſhould not heſitate to declare againſt *hereditary authority*, monarchs and nobles; and to feel ourſelves devoted to a well regulated popular conſtitution.

In a Monarchy and Ariſtocracy, the intereſt of the government is directly oppoſed to that of the people. There is a pretence of balancing the powers of government; but there is in fact, no other meaning to the maxim, but that of bringing the people in, as a balance to quell the contentions between the monarchy and the ariſtocracy. Where there are no ſuch contending powers, there is no need of a third inſtitution for a balance. It has been aſſerted, that an ariſtocracy, that is, a better ſort of people, exiſts in every country! This may be true in a certain ſenſe, but in a Republic, where the eſtates deſcend to all the children indiſcriminately, and there is no right to power from inheritance; there the reſpectability of families, the influence of wealth, without the ornaments of ſcience and virtue, have but a temporary and feeble effect. The body of the people, will, from the views of intereſt, generally, promote

mote and place confidence in the beſt men as they riſe. So that there is no ariſtocracy, in fact, exiſting in an elective Republic.

In a Republic, the intereſt of the ruler and magiſtrate, is the intereſt of the people. The happineſs of the Preſident, the Senator and the Repreſentative, is inſeparably connected with that of his conſtituents. Their ſmiles and good wiſhes excite his ambition, and produce his pleaſures. The equal laws, dividing the eſtates of the anceſtor, indiſcriminately, amongſt all his children, preſerve an equality of property, which nothing but accident, idleneſs or profligacy can ſubvert. The inſtances of theſe cannot happen ſo as to endanger the nation. The univerſal diſſemination of literature, and the equal priviledges of information from ſchools, academies and colleges, give genius and virtue, a fair chance for preferment and promotion. The people are ſecure in their poſſeſſions and ſafe in their property, ſo that life is a bleſſing, and the ſmalleſt poſſeſſions are great riches. No citizen feels himſelf debaſed, excepting from unworthy conduct, and no one feels himſelf exalted, but from thoſe private virtues, which render him independent, or thoſe public accompliſhments which gain him the confidence of his fellow-citizens.

It is true, that ſometimes, genius and ability, are cheriſhed by ſomeNoblemen, or by a Prince, in a monarchy; and it is as true, that there are vaſtly more inſtances, where genius is treated with contempt by thoſe haughty ſons of power and opulence. The poet, the philoſopher, or hiſtorian, who gains a patronage amongſt the great, is obliged to ſacrifice in the meanneſs of adulation, and to waſte his noble independence of ſoul, in order

to

to obtain ſupport. If in this way, genius flouriſhes, it muſt be at the expenſe of public liberty, and to the diſhonour of human nature.

In a Republic, each man realiſes an intereſt in the government which defends his perſon and property, which preſerves his civil liberty and privileges; but no man can realiſe an intereſt in that government, which holds him in a ſlaviſh ſubordination to his fellow-men, and renders his life at hazard every moment, and his property conſtantly precarious.

It may be ſaid, that the outrages of anarchy, render life and property as precarious in France, as they could be under the moſt abſolute and tyrannical government. This may be true, but it is to be conſidered, that the nation of France, is in a revolutionary proceſs, and that there is not any ſtate, or form of government free from convulſions and inſurrections. The Revolution from the dominion of one tyrant to that of another, produces the ſame calamities. This is abundantly witneſſed in England, in the conteſts of the Houſes of Lancaſter and York, and of that between the Houſe of Hanover and the Houſe of Stewarts. If we attend to mobs, we ſee as many of them in England and in Conſtantinople, as in popular governments.

Why then ſhall not France, by one noble effort, free herſelf from thoſe ignominious ſhackles which ſhe has worn for ages? She may fail in the attempt, but then it is an undertaking of magnanimity, and the world is deeply intereſted in the important event.

Perhaps, the claims of royalty, may hold the nation in a ſtate of warfare for years, but it certainly is infinitely preferrable, for the preſent generation to wear out their lives in the defence

of

of rational liberty, and civil freedom, which ſhall be tranſmitted to their poſterity, than tamely to bow their necks to the block, and leave their children chains, vaſſalage and poverty, as a miſerable patrimony.

SHOULD the conteſt be continued for twenty years longer, there ſtill will be an encreaſing hope, that the riſing generation, bred in the ſchool of Republicaniſm, will be quite capable of enjoying what their intrepid and patriotic anceſtors ſhall have purchaſed at the expenſe of their lives. Monuments of never ending honours will be raiſed by a grateful poſterity to the men who contended in blood, for the deareſt rights of humanity.

SHOULD we turn our attention to our own country, we ſhall there ſee human nature in its natural dignity. The ſovereignty is collected to a point by the public voice, and ſupported by the free ſuffrages of the whole people. Each citizen feels his own conſequence as a ſupporter of the government, and cultivates a degree of public pride, in maintaining an inſtitution, which he conſiders as his own. He ſubmits to the laws, becauſe it is for his higheſt intereſt, that it ſhould be reciprocated by others. He does not violate his neighbour's property, or invade his rights, becauſe he wiſhes to be ſecure in his own. Each one is emulous to gain the public approbation, becauſe it is the road to preferment, and honour. The objection is, that the people too frequently beſtow their ſuffrages upon unworthy characters. This is undeniably true; but it is as true, that there are infinitely greater miſtakes made, where the appintments are by a prince; and that hereditary authority is found by experience, generally

to

to be veſted in the hands of weak or wicked men A miſtake in the former, may be cured, but thoſe which ſo frequently happen in the latter, are permanent, and irretrievable.

HAD we a Preſident and Senate, in the United States, who held their offices for life, they would feel an independence of the people, a haughtineſs of diſpoſition, and a moroſeneſs of temper to which they are now ſtrangers. Wars, and controverſies might gratify their ambition and revenge, and ſatiate their avarice. And their offices, of courſe would be of ſo much importance as to render elections turbulent, and dangerous. An hereditary ſyſtem might, in this country, be the remedy, as it hath been in others. But whilſt we maintain our governments, by frequent elections, promote the arts and ſciences, encourage literature, and make the laws congenial to ſuch a form of government, we are ſecured equally from tyranny and anarchy.

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BY AN AMERICAN.

LETTER No. XV.

SINCE I wrote my laſt letter on the affairs of France, and with which I intended to cloſe my correſpondence on the ſubject, there has occurred a new commotion which may excite your inquiries. I mean the tranſaction which has ſent into baniſhment, many members of the Executive and Legiſlative, with divers others. This has arreſted the freedom of the preſs, and ſeemingly controled that part of the conſtitution, which admits of the freedom of ſpeaking, writing, or printing, upon any ſubject.

WHEN the conſtitution was formed, every one who attended to the nature of things, was convinced, that the enemies of the revolution, would avail themſelves of that privilege, to divide the people, create factions, and introduce a reſtored monarchy. There were in Auguſt 1797, forty-three Printers in Paris, thirty-four of whom devoted their papers to the Monarchial party, and did every thing within the power of their ſupporters, to overthrow the Republic, and to reeſtabliſh a regal government. This muſt have been expected; for whilſt the people of France are united, all the powers on earth cannot overthrow a government founded in their voluntary

tary conſent; but a diviſion amongſt themſelves, muſt certainly accompliſh all that their enemies can wiſh for. It is then much leſs expenſive, to maintain printers, and writers to divide, than fleets and armies to ſubdue the Republicans of the French nation.

It has been aſſerted, and with at leaſt the appearance of propriety, that the French people, in arreſting, and baniſhing ſome of the Executive and Legiſlative members, have groſly violated the conſtitution, and the laws.

To have made a proviſion in the conſtitution for ſuch an exigency, would have carried an alarming aſpect with it. Such proviſion muſt have been founded on an idea, that a number of powerful men might combine to overthrow the Republic. This was inadmiſſible, at the time when the conſtitution was compiled; but if it had been ſuppoſed, it ought never to have been expreſſed.

If there is no proviſion in the conſtitution, for the meaſure, yet there may be a good, and valid juſtification for the procedure. There are caſes of extreme neceſſity, frequently attached to circumſtances, wherein the laws of the civil community can afford no proper and ready aid, but leave the party to his own exertions, as in a ſtate of nature. There might be a variety of caſes raiſed to elucidate this principle, ſuch as may happen in the diſtreſſes of conflagrations, ſhipwrecks, and the like. But there is one, on which the caſuiſts of the learned world, have generally agreed; that where two men in a ſhipwreck, are on one plank, which cannot bear both to the ſhore, he who hath the ſtrongeſt arm may caſt the other off, to ſave his own life. In this caſe, innocency and guilt are out of the queſtion; but in

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the parties raiſed by a revolution, each one of courſe believes himſelf to be innocent, and the other party to be wrong, if not criminal.

WHETHER Barthelemi, Carnot, Pichegru, and others, were in conſpiracy againſt the Republic, ſome have doubted. We have little evidence in this country upon that ſubject; but he who has read the Britiſh papers, or ſome of the American gazettes, with attention, cannot but conceive that great expectations were raiſed in the Britiſh cabinet, from theſe men. All the American papers which have uniformly condemned the French revolution, and treated the Republic with contempt, were full of eulogies on the characters of thoſe members of the national counſels. And whilſt Great-Britain hath been averſe to peace, and open in her attempts to reſtore Monarchy in France, all the court gazettes have teemed with the praiſes of Barthelemi, Carnot, Pichegru, and Paſtoret.

IT is ſaid that they were for peace; but were they for it on ſuch terms as France could accede to? The Engliſh commiſſioner had no authority to treat on thoſe points, which the Republic had moſt ſacredly ſtipulated to her allies. Should ſhe prove perfidious, and merit their reſentment, then the charge would be, that there is no faith in a Republic, and theſe very allies would become the revengeful abettors of England and Germany, and join in the overthrow of *a faithleſs Republic.*

WHETHER the charge againſt theſe men was true or falſe, yet it is clear, that the nation believed it to be true. When the apprehenſions, or the wiſhes of men, are raiſed to a certain pitch, much leſs evidence will ſatisfy the mind, than is neceſſary at other periods, and on other occaſions.

If the majority of the Directory, and the Legiſlature, believed, that there was ſo dangerous a conſpiracy, why ſhould they wait the formalities of a legal trial? Should they wait until the exertions of an external enemy, had ſecured from puniſhment, the traitors, and placed halters on the necks of the Rupublicans? The very formality of a trial, would have been conſtrued into a puſillanimity of conduct, and a deſpair of maintaining the Republic. The people would have become timid, diſheartned, and divided; and the army have dropt their ſwords from their hands.

We may be allowed to aſk the queſtion, Whether, if in the year 1780, a majority of the American Congreſs had combined to ſurrender the independence of this country to Great-Britain, the people muſt have waited for a formal trial, before they ſhould have expelled them from their ſeats, and, whether Gen. Waſhington and his virtuous army, muſt have ſtood ſilent, until the Britiſh halter was on their necks? In any age of Independence, if the Preſident, Senate, and Congreſs, ſhould conſpire to ſubjugate our nation to any foreign power, each citizen independent of a legal proceſs, would raiſe his arm to deſtroy the lives of them and their ſupporters. Theſe great exigencies admit of no legal formalities. The criſis points to its own remedy, and muſt be attended to. Conſtitutions make no proviſion in ſuch caſes, becauſe they are never anticipated in politics.

It is no compliment to the United States, to ſay, that the men who are now baniſhed from France, were our peculiar friends; for if they were the enemies of the French revolution, they were our friends, under an idea, that we were with them in ſentiment, and connected with the enemies of our ſiſter Republic.

On the whole, it is our intereſt, and duty, as a nation, to maintain a ſtrict neutrality in the European conteſts, to manage our affairs with integrity, firmneſs, and independence, and to leave other nations in charge of their own national concerns.

POSTCRIPT.

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SINCE the aforegoing letters were in the preſs, there has been an important negociation between the French Republic and the Emperor of Germany, and another between the ſame Republic and the Kingdom of Portugal. By theſe Treaties Peace is reſtored to Europe, unleſs the King of Great Britain ſhall obſtinately and fooliſhly continue a fruitleſs and diſtreſſing war.

THE French Republic have guaranteed a Republican form of government to the Netherlands, which would have been long ſince formed, if the Ariſtocracy there, and the intrigues of the Engliſh nation, had not prevented it.—The French have alſo ſtipulated with the Dutch and Spaniards, that they will not make Peace until the King of England ſhall reſtore to them, all the places and countries, which ſhall have been conquered by his forces. There certainly can be no peace with thoſe powers and Great-Britain, without a compliance with the propoſitions made by the French Directory, conſonant to thoſe engagements.

ANOTHER claim made by the French Directory, is, that the ſhips of war obtained by the Engliſh at Toulon, ſhall be reſtored. Thoſe ſhips were not captured, but the commander was bribed by the Engliſh miniſtry to give them up. There is a nice point of national honour with the French, on this article. General Waſhington acted under the ſame ideas, fully juſtified by his fellow-citizens, when he gave the unfortunate Major Andre to the halter, and conſigned the more unfortunate Arnold over to infamy and diſgrace.

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THE pride of Great-Britain riſes in oppoſition to thoſe claims, and ſo it did to the claims of *American Independence*, until neceſſity, the claims of which, are always irreſiſtable, forced the Monarch to comply.

FOR what is Great-Britain contending? If the reſtoration of Monarchy in France is an object, the expectation of that event is at an end, or at leaſt it is rendered certain, that the force of other nations employed againſt the Republic, has not a tendency to effect it. If the Engliſh wiſh for conqueſt, they have no land forces to obtain it with.—They have the command of the ſea, but navies do but little in the protection of commerce. Should the French, the Spaniards, and the Dutch, turn their attention to ſuch veſſels as are formed to commit depredations on commerce, a ſmall proportion of the expence which would be called for in the ſupport of a navy, would cover the ocean with cruiſers, and annihilate the Britiſh commerce. The debt of that nation now claims vaſtly more money for its annual intereſt, than the whole taxes laid on the oppreſſed people, amount to, even if they had neither fleet or army.

UNDER theſe appearances, a general peace muſt take place—England muſt comply. She is now to weep over her own folly, for committing herſelf to misfortunes in which ſhe had no concern.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 8, line 12, from top, for *phial*, read *vial*.
P. 11, l. 12, 16, 23, fr. top, for *father*, r. *great grandfather*.
P. 14, l. 8, from top, for *hearty*, r. *haughty*.
P. 45, l. 10, fr. top, for *to open*, r. *who could open*.
P. 47, l. 3, of letter IX, for *new arms*, r. *remains*.
P. 48, l. 12, from top, for *more*, r. *mens*.
P. 96, l. 26, after *men*, insert, *in esse*.

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